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Albright: Don't cut PA aid

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright yesterday advised Congress not to cut aid to the Palestinians.

Meanwhile, State Department and National Security Council officials denied an Army Radio report that Ambassador Martin Indyk will be replaced by Ambassador to Italy Reg Bartholomew.

However, sources in Italy confirmed Bartholomew is expected to be the next ambassador to Israel.

Albright told a Senate subcommittee: "I think we have to keep in mind what it is we're trying to accomplish here... We are all very frustrated at the moment... I think we have to be very careful in how we react at this stage, to make sure that we do not worsen the situation."

Rehov Bar-Ilan closes tonight

By BATSHEVA TSUR and ELLI WOHLGELERTER

Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan will be closed to traffic during Shabbat prayer times starting tonight, after Meretz yesterday withdrew a petition on the issue to the High Court of Justice, at the court's suggestion.

Meretz Party leader Yossi Sarid and Jerusalem city councilman Omer Yekutieli withdrew the petition after it was found to contain technical faults. However, they will be permitted to submit it again later if their fear of violence against secular residents proves valid.

The petition had asked for an interim injunction against Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy's plan to close the road.

See BAR-ILAN Page 2



Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi (right) and MK Silvan Shalom smile at a rally in Tel Aviv opposing the reinstatement of Ya'acov Ne'eman to the Justice Ministry. (Israel Sun)

Hundreds rally for Hanegbi to keep Justice Ministry portfolio

By SARAH HONIG

"There is no Likud bypass road to gain entry into this government," Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi announced yesterday at a rally against the reappointment of former justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman.

Hanegbi, who organized the rally with Likud MK Silvan Shalom, wants to retain the portfolio, even though he was given it with the clear stipulation that he would have to give it up if Ne'eman was acquitted in his trial on perjury and obstruction of justice charges — as he was.

Shalom does not want Ne'eman to return to the government as his reappointment would mean the cabinet had reached its maximum quota of 18 ministers, thereby denying Shalom the chance of being appointed science minister.

The two stressed that their rally, at Likud headquarters in Tel Aviv, was not anti-Binyamin Netanyahu and they instructed all participants not to attack the prime minister. Nevertheless, there were numerous statements made against him.

Hanegbi and Shalom managed to attract several hundred Likud activists, central committee members and branch heads. Hanegbi pointed out that "these people are the hard-core nucleus who brought Netanyahu to power."

The implication, agreed the participants, was that if Netanyahu lets Hanegbi and Shalom down, he will find them massing against him in the central committee and other party forums. Some of those who took part in the rally said that the first anti-Netanyahu action might be to pass a ruling that all Likud appointments to the cabinet must receive central committee approval.

"Ne'eman was not with us last May 29," Hanegbi said, referring to the election. "Silvan and I worked tirelessly for the victory. I am flesh of the Likud's flesh... Ne'eman is not a Likud member and I don't recall a case of a minister being appointed on Likud quota who did not battle for the Likud's cause. We don't need an expert but someone who rose from the ranks and represents the people."

Shalom told the gathering he had "never organized a political function for personal gain. This is no exception. This gathering is for the Likud's sake. It would strengthen the prime minister and help him get reelected and it would help the Likud. We don't want an outsider appointed justice minister and we want a Likud member as science minister. I must be the premier to choose the best from among the Likud candidates for this post."

PM, Mubarak to meet Tuesday

By MICHAL YUDELMAN and BATSHEVA TSUR

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu are to meet Tuesday in Sharm e-Sheikh in what Jerusalem hopes will be a new Egyptian initiative to break the deadlock in the peace process.

Foreign Minister Amr Moussa is to arrive Monday to lay the groundwork for the summit in meetings with Netanyahu, Foreign Minister David Levy, and President Ezer Weizman.

Israel Radio reported last night

of contacts between Netanyahu and Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny, which led to a telephone conversation between Netanyahu and Mubarak yesterday.

Moussa, who was to accept an honorary doctorate from Ben-Gurion University on Monday, changed his plans and will be meeting Palestinian Authority leaders in an overall effort to save the peace process.

Netanyahu and Levy and their respective offices are preparing for the meetings with Moussa and Mubarak and examining ways in which Egypt can fit into the peace process and play a constructive role in it.

"We hope the Egyptians will come with ideas and proposals and that it will be possible to find ways to resume the peace process," said Uzi Arad, Netanyahu's new political adviser.

Earlier yesterday, sources in the Prime Minister's Office expressed dissatisfaction with both Mubarak and Weizman for their attempts to hold a summit meeting, accusing them of trying to set up what they called "a Netanyahu bypass road."

See PM, Page 2

Plan for Jerusalem Arab housing approved, Page 2

Settlers open hotline for Palestinian land dealers, Page 3

that Mubarak's political adviser Osama Baz will also be coming to lay the groundwork for the meeting.

The summit, which was suggested by Mubarak, followed a series

Foreign Ministry officials upset at US, UN postings

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

Senior Foreign Ministry officials are fuming over the diplomatic appointments to the US and the UN announced Wednesday night, complaining they are political rather than professional appointments.

The most senior diplomatic posts in Washington and New York will be taken up by persons from outside the ministry, whose main qualification is their political loyalty to either the prime minister or foreign minister, ministry sources said, while the ministry's professional staff will be "stripped" of the most influential and important positions.

The new appointments include Dore Gold as ambassador to the UN, Leonard Davis, former head of AIPAC's Jerusalem office, as deputy chief of mission in Washington, and Ra'anan Gissin, spokesman for the National Infrastructure Ministry, as information attaché in Washington.

The Foreign Ministry sources said the ministry's union is considering challenging some of the new appointments.

The Foreign Ministry's supreme appointments committee did not approve of the new appointments at its meeting yesterday for technical reasons: They have to be approved by another committee first.

"Until that happens, there may be more changes," one ministry source said.

Ambassador to the US Eliahu Ben-Elissar returned to Washington in triumph yesterday, after managing to retain his post despite the belief that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu had planned to replace him with Gold.

"There was quite an ado. I'm not returning in an easy situation, because the noise about my so-called replacement already caused a lot of damage," Ben-Elissar said. He insisted on getting a statement of support from the prime minister, and Netanyahu issued such a statement later in the day.

Gold, 43, who has US and Israeli citizenship, yesterday began the procedure to renounce his US citizenship, as the law requires that senior diplomats hold only Israeli citizenship.

Foreign Minister David Levy yesterday confirmed three political appointments: Shmuel Siso, consul-general in New York; his adviser Uri Oren, ambassador to South Africa; and Dror Zeigerman, ambassador to Britain.

For sale: Lord Balfour's residence

By DANIEL J. CHALFEN

Whittingehame House, which houses the private library in which Lord Arthur Balfour drafted the Balfour Declaration and was the training ground for many pre-state Zionist pioneers, has just been put up for sale.

The house, located in East Lothian, about 32 kilometers from Edinburgh, was built to design by Sir Robert Smirke in 1817 for

James Balfour, the grandfather of Arthur James Balfour, synonymous with the declaration drafted there in August 1917.

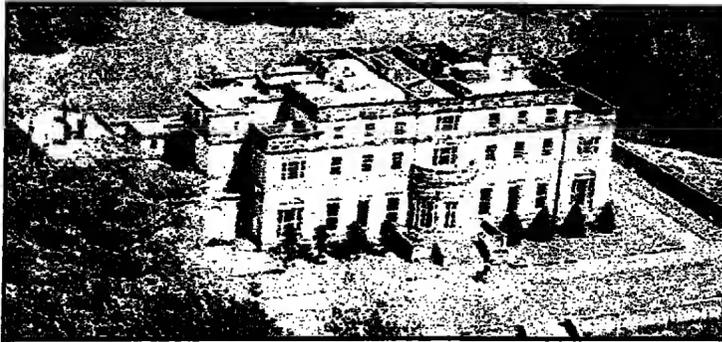
Arthur Balfour inherited the house in 1869. In 1874, he was elected a Member of Parliament; in 1888 he became leader of the House of Commons. He served as prime minister from 1902 to 1905 and as foreign secretary from 1916 to 1919, during which period he wrote the declaration. He died in 1930.

During Balfour's lifetime, he received many important guests at Whittingehame. Among his last visitors before his death was Chaim Weizmann.

In 1939, Whittingehame House was made available for an innovative scheme to establish a training farm for Jewish refugee children from Europe, primarily from Germany and Czechoslovakia, to prepare them for immigration to Palestine. The project was financed by Scottish Jews.

The school's first intake was 51 children, but as the war commenced and then intensified, the number quickly increased. According to Paul Harris, who wrote *From Whittingehame 1939 to Israel 1989: 50th Anniversary Booklet of the Whittingehame Farm School*, between 300 and 400 youths passed through the house between January 1939 and September 1941.

Harris writes about Harry Nomburg, who was born in Coburg in central Germany and escaped to Whittingehame House to work at the farm school in 1939. He was



Whittingehame House

(Kodian-C)

later recruited by a top secret unit known as X-Troop, and he parachuted behind the German lines.

"Whittingehame, I consider the happiest year of my life," wrote another attendee 50 years later. "The camaraderie, simplicity, and last unaffected carefree year of my youth, the *halutz* (pioneer) spirit with its enthusiasm, singing, religious services, dancing, and emerging puberty."

Many of the people who passed through the house are now believed to live here.

James McDonnell, current owner and seller of the property, said that people still arrive unannounced at the door to ask if they might view the "birthplace of Israel."

The house is surrounded by 18 acres of grounds. It houses some of the finest rooms in any Scottish residence, including the library in which Balfour drafted the renowned resolution calling for

"the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

The asking price for Whittingehame House is £300,000.

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Jerusalem	6:56 p.m.	8:16 p.m.
Tel Aviv	7:14 p.m.	8:19 p.m.
Haifa	7:09 p.m.	8:19 p.m.
BeerSheva	7:11 p.m.	8:09 p.m.
Eilat	7:08 p.m.	8:12 p.m.



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NEWS

in brief

Rioting quelled in Bethlehem

Rioting broke out in Bethlehem yesterday after Khaled Abu Dayeh, 37, of Beit Safafa, who died at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital on Tuesday, was buried in Bethlehem. An IDF soldier was lightly wounded by a rock thrown at him, and five Palestinians were injured by tear gas and rubber bullets. An autopsy, which was done at the Institute for Forensic Medicine at Abu Kabir, indicated that he had been beaten to death. He reportedly ran amok in the hospital, and was restrained by police.

Abu Dayeh was arrested two weeks ago after he tried to steal a weapon from a soldier in Jerusalem's Old City, police said. He was transferred to a psychiatric hospital after he attempted suicide at the city jail and said he heard voices telling him to steal. He was brought to the hospital for treatment of a sore throat.

Itim

Three killed on roads

A man was killed last night on the Ta'anachim road when his van swerved and hit a tree.

A motorcyclist was fatally injured when his motorcycle overturned near the Hiriyia Junction.

Kamil Arntanus, 24, died yesterday of injuries suffered in a road accident the previous day at the Marar junction.

Itim

Police investigating Bat Yam murder

Tel Aviv police are investigating the murder of Haim Ben-Shimon, 31, who was gunned down in Bat Yam in broad daylight on Wednesday. One man was arrested that night in connection with the murder, but was later released.

The gunman apparently followed Ben-Shimon, who was known to police, and deflated one of the tires on his car. Ben-Shimon returned to his car and, while he was changing the tire, was shot by the passenger of a moped. The two men on the moped sped away.

Raine Marcus



Japhet dies

Ernst Japhet, former chairman of the board of Bank Leumi, died yesterday morning at New York University Medical Center during open heart surgery, a hospital official said. Japhet, 76, was convicted in 1994 of fraud for his involvement in the 1983 bank shares scandal. He had fled the country in 1987 following a public outcry over his enormous pension and severance pay, and returned to face trial only after being assured he would not be arrested. He is to be flown back to Israel for burial, but funeral arrangements have not yet been announced.

(Text: Marilyn Henry; Photo: Ariel Jerolimski)

3,000 Arab homes approved

New Jerusalem housing units to face Har Homa

By ELLI WOHLGELER

A plan for the construction of 3,000 new apartment units in the Arab neighborhood of Sur Bahir, which faces Har Homa, has been approved by the Jerusalem Regional Planning Committee.

The plan will quadruple the number of housing units in the area and is designed to preserve the rural character of Sur Bahir.

Motti Houta, chairman of the Jerusalem planning board, said that although the plans for Sur Bahir were begun separately in 1994, "It's clear that since it's near Har Homa, and Har Homa recently passed its final stages, that ... the two plans are tied together."

"They are being built side by side, Har

Homa and Sur Bahir, and there [will be] an industrial area between them, and a road that connects them."

Houta said Sur Bahir residents, some of whom protested against the building at Har Homa, are extremely happy with the plans for additional housing units.

"Regarding Har Homa, [this building plan] lessened their anger to some extent," he said.

Houta said actual construction will depend on the private owners of each plot of land, who now have to prepare their own plans to start building.

"But I know from the people that came to me that there are at least a few hundred families that have been waiting for this plan to start building," he said.

Houta said that there are a little over 1,000 families living in the village.

Plans also call for the construction of an industrial area, and 400 apartments that will be built by the government on some 80 dunams of land in the center of Sur Bahir.

Margot Dudkevitch adds:

Head of the foreign desk of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, Yechiel Leiter, said yesterday that the government should take a hard look at the decision to build thousands of units for the Palestinian population.

"Certainly to accompany this decision there should be a demand to cease further illegal buildings by the Palestinians," he said.

US calls on PA to release Kuttab

By JON IMMANUEL and agencies

Daoud Kuttab, the Palestinian journalist arrested on Tuesday, remains in a Ramallah jail, where his three children visited him yesterday and reported he is being well-treated, his wife said.

It is expected that he will not be released without a direct order from Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, who returned from Cairo yesterday.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said yesterday the PA should release Kuttab immediately.

"It's our understanding that Mr. Kuttab has not been charged with any infractions, and we are very concerned about the implications of his detention both for the rule of law and for freedom of the press," McCurry told reporters.

"We believe the Palestinian Authority should release him immediately," he said.

B'Tselem and the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists also called on the PA and Arafat to release Kuttab immediately. The committee linked Kuttab's arrest to an article which appeared in the Washington Post on Tuesday in which Kuttab quoted Nahil Amr, a senior Arafat aide, newspaper publisher and Palestine Broadcasting Corporation supervisor, as admitting to jamming Kuttab's TV station but ordering Kuttab to keep quiet about it.

Amr denied any cover-up.

Kuttab's wife Noha said she believed Arafat wanted to talk to her husband about his claims that the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation had been jamming his broadcasts of the Palestinian Legislative Council sessions.

IDF papers found in flea market

By ARIEN O'SULLIVAN

Classified IDF documents, including those detailing Air Force procedures during times of emergency, were surfaced in the Jaffa flea market and reportedly have been quickly scooped up by the public.

The documents apparently include training manuals for the Israeli-produced Kfir fighter jet and were being sold by a used book dealer for between NIS 15 and NIS 25.

The story first surfaced yesterday in an Army Radio report which said a copy of the Kfir manual had been purchased. The manual detailed the jet's limitations and classified technical data. It also outlined IAF procedures during normal and emergency periods. On its cover was written: "This document contains information concerning the security of the state. The finder is required to immediately turn it over to the nearest Israeli police station."

According to Army Radio, the used book dealer acquired the Kfir manual and other classified IDF documents a number of days ago from a man selling them from his car. The dealer said that the next day, four people snatched up a number of the books.

The presence of classified IDF documents on the open market didn't seem to move the dealer, who told Army Radio that it really wasn't his job to be the guardian of state security.

The IDF Spokesman said it was checking the report.



Partners against crime

Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani (left) and Foreign Minister David Levy toast Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Anatoly Koliakov (right) in Jerusalem yesterday, after the two countries signed a cooperation agreement on fighting crime. Earlier, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu met Koliakov, and the two discussed organized crime and terrorism. After the meeting, Netanyahu said two states share similar crime and terrorism problems. He noted that the visit had raised the level of relations between Israel and Russia.

(Text: Michal Yudelman; Photo: Brian Hendler)

PM

Continued from Page 1

PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's presence in Cairo strengthened these suspicions.

The sources criticized Weizman for being "out of line," noting that his two meetings with Arafat were somehow accepted, "but a meeting with Mubarak is definitely too much."

The sources also slammed Egypt, and said the meeting is an attempt to use Weizman to cover up Egypt's negative role in the process.

They noted that Egypt has systematically sabotaged every initiative to solve the crisis, causing the Palestinians to take harsher positions, while at the same time initiating public moves intended to show Netanyahu up as the one responsible for the crisis.

On Wednesday, Netanyahu met Bassiouny, who brought him a message from Mubarak. Netanyahu sent a reply, urging Mubarak to assume a more positive stance in the struggle to get the peace talks back on track. The exchange led to their telephone conversation.

Weizman will also meet with Mubarak in the middle of next week.

"The president gives his bless-

ings to the meeting" between Netanyahu and Mubarak, said Weizman's bureau chief Arye Shumer, minutes after Weizman and Netanyahu had exchanged information on their contacts with Cairo by telephone.

In December 1994, Weizman made a trip to Cairo and renewed his long-time ties with Mubarak. He has continued to use his good offices with Arab leaders since then.

Earlier yesterday, when it seemed that he alone would be meeting Mubarak, Weizman rebutted charges that he was stepping on Netanyahu's toes. "I have known Mubarak for years, and we are in constant contact. Whenever I can help, I shall," Weizman told reporters.

Sources said the planned meeting had been coordinated between Shumer and the Egyptians with the full knowledge of cabinet secretary Danny Navet.

For his part, Netanyahu appeared to be repeating a pattern of stepping in when apparently about to be upstaged—which started with Weizman's inviting Arafat to Caesarea, that was eventually preceded by a Netanyahu-Arafat meeting, and continued with Netanyahu stepping in when Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai was about to go to Amman.

BAR-ILAN

Continued from Page 1

Under the arrangement, Bar-Ilan will be closed for one hour and 45 minutes from the beginning of Shabbat and the eve of holidays, between 7:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Shabbat and holidays, and for one hour and 45 minutes before the end of Shabbat or holiday. At other hours the street will be open to all traffic.

The closure will affect Rehov Bar-Ilan from Rehov Shmuel Hanavi to Rehov Brandeis. The street will not be physically blocked off, however, so that emergency vehicles can pass. Secular residents of the area will be issued passes by the Transport Ministry that will allow them access to the street at all times. People coming to visit Bar-Ilan residents will have to park at either end of the closed portion and walk.

Court President Aharon Barak and Justices Eliezer Goldberg and Yitzhak Zamir, proposed at the outset of the hearing that the petition, apparently based on reports from a news conference by Levy, be corrected. However, the petitioners said they preferred to go ahead with the hearing because of the urgency of the matter.

The petitioners were joined by a disabled veteran, who said he would not be able to visit his parents who

live in the neighborhood if he could not drive there. The justices proposed that Levy review parking arrangements for the disabled.

After consultation, the petitioners decided to accept the court's proposal, but said they are retaining the right to resubmit a petition should violence break out.

The police plan to deploy 100-150 officers, who will be stationed at each end of the closed-off section.

"The police will stand next to the signs that tell drivers when to drive through the street, when it's closed or open," said police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby. "When the electronic sign says the street is open, we will let the cars through."

He said that Jerusalem police chief Cmdr. Yair Yitzhaki had met with hardy leaders this week to calm the situation.

"They said they will try to do their best to prevent disturbances, and prevent the throwing of stones and garbage," Ben-Ruby said.

Yekutieli said that he is preparing another petition on how the secular residents of the neighborhood will be allowed access to their homes. He said that Levy had decided to close 700 meters of Rehov Bar-Ilan, more than originally planned, and that this prevented one resident, who must use crutches, from reaching his home.

On the issue of hardy violence, Yekutieli quoted Justice Goldberg, who "said with a smile that 'you're presuming that the violence will go on. Let's take a little chance that the violence will stop, that the haredim will understand that violence doesn't help their cause.'"

He said that the court suggested waiting a few weeks, and left the door open for a renewed appeal if the situation deteriorates again.

ARRIVALS

For the 27th Board of Governors Meeting of the Ben Gurion University of the Negev: Lyn and Malcolm Chalkin, Australia; Drs. Bernard and Esther Barneit, Irene and Hyman Kraitman, Sir Aaron King, England; Milada Ayrton, Switzerland; Norbert Blochman, Jane Brasserler, Rosalind Henwood, Dorothy Levy, Senator Daniel and Elizabeth Moynihan, Harold Oshry, Meura Russell, Fred Stegmann, U.S.A.

For the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of Tel Aviv University: From Brazil, Mr. and Mrs. Jaime Sarau. From the Netherlands: Sonja and John Matheijn, Chairman of the Dutch Friends of Tel Aviv University.

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Ticket number 070753 in the weekly Payis Hazak draw won the NIS 1 million prize. Ticket 687652 won a car. Tickets 202741, 794775, 659928, 264690, 784164, 392080, 236477 and 865533 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 32968, 01599, 76683, 44383, 23210, 83277, 84546, 14939, 30455, 73251, 72374, 92084, 48496, 52683, 32185, 77261, 20087, 29356, and 52954 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 496, 485, 657 and 141 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 12, 54, 11, and 61 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 26 and 38 won NIS 20, and those ending in 3 and 8 won NIS 10.

The winning cards in yesterday's first Chance draw were the seven of spades, jack of hearts, nine of diamonds, and king of clubs. The results of the second draw were the king of spades, ten of hearts, seven of diamonds and king of clubs.

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Mordechai briefs top French general

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

French Chief of Staff Gen. Jean-Philippe Douin got a lengthy review of the situation in Lebanon from Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai yesterday and then flew to the northern border for a first-hand look.

The top French general, accompanied by his senior officers, visited some border outposts and then traveled to the Central Command for a briefing on the West Bank and the security arrangements with the Palestinians.

Earlier, Douin was greeted at



French Chief of Staff Gen. Jean-Philippe Douin (right) and Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak salute as they receive an honor guard in Tel Aviv yesterday.

Hizbullah power struggle, Page 18

Camp Rabin in Tel Aviv by an official honor guard and then met with his Israeli counterpart Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak and Mordechai.

The defense minister gave him a strategic briefing on Israel's security situation.

The minister in his review dwelled on the situation in south Lebanon and on the inability of Lebanon to conduct peace negotiations due to its dependency on the Syrians, a ministry statement said. France contributes a few hundred troops to UNIFIL, the UN force in south Lebanon.

Mordechai also warned Douin of the dangers from the acquisition

of non-conventional weapons by Iraq and Iran and expressed Israel's readiness to strengthen military links with Paris.

Douin's two-day visit is part of the ongoing reciprocal visits between IDF and French officers. Last September, Douin

hosted Shahak in Paris. OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliyahu is to visit France this summer.

Douin is to meet with President Weizman this morning. He then is to visit Yitzhak Rabin's grave and Yad Vashem.

Turkish navy ships to visit Haifa for first time

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

In a prelude to joint naval maneuvers, a small fleet of Turkish navy vessels will make a port call in Haifa next month during routine exercises in the Mediterranean, news agencies quoted a Turkish daily as reporting yesterday.

It will be the first time that a Turkish navy ship visits and is a further sign of the warming military ties between the two countries.

According to the Ankara daily *Radikal*, the

three frigates will visit between June 3 and 27. They will also call in Alexandria, Egypt and the breakaway Turkish Cypriot state.

The eastern Mediterranean is expected to see a flurry of sea exercises this summer. Israel, Turkey, and the US have scheduled joint naval maneuvers. And Israel and Greece are also to hold joint maneuvers at the end of June.

Earlier this week, Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos confirmed that Greece

and Israel will hold joint military exercises in the Aegean Sea. Previous reports from Athens said the exercise will last 10 days and take place near the island of Rhodes, just off the Turkish coast.

Defense Ministry officials said they would focus on search and rescue missions.

The joint naval maneuvers between Israel and Greece would constitute the first implementation of a 1994 military pact between the two countries.

In an interview with *Ha'aretz*, this week, Pangalos said there is some concern in Greece over the strategic alliance being forged between Israel and Turkey.

"There is no argument that Israel and Turkey are sovereign states, but we don't want this military cooperation between them to cast a shadow on the relations between Israel, Greece, and Cyprus," he said. "And we are not interested in Ankara using its military cooperation with Israel to create this sort of impression."

Settlers, MKs set up hot line for threatened Palestinians

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

"Shalom, you have reached the voice-mail box of the Land of Israel Front in the Knesset. We are ready to assist all those who feel threatened by the Palestinian Authority regarding the land issue or any other issues."

"Please leave a telephone number where you may be reached, and we will contact you shortly."

This is a translation of the recorded message in Arabic that greets those calling the Land of Israel Front and Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza's hot line that opened yesterday morning.

NRP MKs visit Yitzhar settlers

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Members of the National Religious Party paid a visit to settlers on the hilltop in Yitzhar yesterday to show their support and discuss ways to ensure the settlement's legal expansion.

Ten families are now living there in makeshift homes and tents. The IDF has set up a post nearby to monitor the situation.

MKs Hanan Porat, Shaul Yablum, Zvi Hendel and Nissan Slomiansky spent several hours at the settlement talking to residents.

The MKs criticized President Ezer Weizman's decision to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in an attempt to salvage the peace process.

"If the president wishes to advise the prime minister, he should do so in four walls, and not go out to meet [Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser] Arafat or the Egyptian president," said Hendel.

Slomiansky, the party's latest addition, said that if permission had been granted to construct thousands of units for the Palestinians, then settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza should be granted permission to start massive construction.

Two weeks ago, the IDF demolished three illegal buildings on the hilltop at Yitzhar and were criticized for the rough way they evicted the settlers.

MKs and the Council of Jewish Communities of Judea, Samaria and Gaza have been in touch with Defense Ministry officials hoping to seek a peaceful solution.

According to Yechiel Leiter, head of the council's foreign desk, by yesterday afternoon the hot line had registered six callers.

Leiter said that this isn't the first time the council had offered help to Palestinians. During the intifada years, he said, many Palestinians suspected of cooperating with the Israeli authorities sought the council's help.

"We put them in touch with the different authorities who were able to help them," he said.

Now, says Leiter, some of those they helped are involved as middlemen in land dealing. The council, intent on highlighting the threat to land dealers from the PA, decided to open up the hot line together with the Land of Israel Front caucus.

"What is really interesting is that all the left-wing and human rights organizations have remained silent on the subject," he said.

Leiter said the hot line is monitored constantly. A person who speaks fluent Arabic and has a security background screens the calls and decides whom to contact - the security services, the police or the IDF.

Five of the calls, said Leiter, were from Judea and Samaria. The sixth, he said, was a Jew who offered the details of an Arab with an Israeli ID who had gone to the PA and offered to track down land dealers, people he had done business with in the past.

Leiter said that the council had approached Palestinian papers in eastern Jerusalem on Wednesday to publish a paid advertisement about the hot line.

"One of the papers agreed and then a few hours later called us back to say they couldn't run the ad," he said. "All the other papers we approached refused on the spot."

Yesterday afternoon, council leaders lodged a complaint with the Interior Ministry and Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani.

IDF uncovers Hebron arms cache

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Security agents and IDF troops uncovered an arms cache, including two bombs, in searches in the village of Deir Tzamat, near Hebron, the army said. A Border Police sapper exploded the two pipe bombs.

The cache was found in a well. Its discovery came after the arrest and interrogation of dozens of suspected Hamas activists in the Hebron and Bethlehem area.

Meanwhile, in Gush Katif, a fake bomb was found near the settlement of Avshalom. Young men from the settlement are suspected of planting it there as a joke.

The bomb was discovered after the head of security at Avshalom found a hole in the fence. IDF soldiers, aided by a tracker, soon located the bomb, which turned out to be fake.

An initial investigation led the army to local youth. The affair is now under police investigation.

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NEWS

in brief

Oded Kottler resigns

Haifa Theater general manager Oded Kottler yesterday requested the board release him from his contract. The board is currently establishing a committee to search for his replacement so that there will be an orderly transfer of authority. Kottler, who has been in his post for seven years, gave no reasons for his resignation. *Helen Kaye*

Warning on animal abuse on Lag Ba'omer

Lev LeChai, an animal welfare group specializing in cats, is warning the public to look out for cases of animal abuse on Lag Ba'omer, which starts Saturday night. A spokeswoman for the group said yesterday that every year there are several reported cases of animals, particularly cats and kittens, deliberately thrown onto bonfires. The group operates an emergency line between 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. at 03-6055150. Volunteers willing to patrol are also invited to call. Cases of abuse should be reported to the police and local animal welfare groups. *Liat Collins*

Digital broadcasting conference to open

A conference on digital audio broadcasting (DAB) is to be held next week at Kfar Hamaccabiah. The gathering, organized by Bezeq, will include broadcasting and communications experts from Israel and abroad.

The digital technique, which is already functioning in Europe, allows very clear reception of sound even while traveling in a vehicle.

It is also an efficient way of using the frequency spectrum because a up to six channels may be carried on a single frequency. Bezeq has started testing DAB transmitters at Eitanim and the Ayalon Junction. *Judy Siegel*

Polish Embassy seeks dormant account info

The Polish Embassy this week requested that individuals filing requests with the Polish Justice Ministry for information regarding dormant accounts in Swiss banks that belonged to Polish citizens who died in the Holocaust send copies of their requests to their office in Tel Aviv.

The copies should be sent to: Consular Section of the Republic of Poland, 16 Soutine Street, Tel Aviv, 64684. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

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* May 28, Jerusalem, Kol Henehama, 7:30 p.m.
* May 29, Tel Aviv, Yisrael Yafa Studies Center, 8:30 p.m.

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Independence without freedom

The arrest of Daoud Kuttab, a Palestinian who heads Al Quds TV, is just the latest example of the dictatorial rule established by Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. Kuttab's crime: He dared to broadcast sessions of the Palestinian legislative council.

Earlier, Kuttab complained in the American press that he had witnessed the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation deliberately jamming his broadcasts, and was told to ignore what he saw. Given that Kuttab is a US citizen, a resident of Jerusalem, and his station receives US funding, his arrest by the Palestinian Police would seem not only wrong and illegal, but downright clumsy.

The Kuttab arrest comes on the heels of gangland-style murders of Palestinian land dealers, after Arafat endorsed the death penalty for selling land to Jews. The US State Department, in a rare public criticism of Arafat, called this decree "reprehensible." Kuttab may well be released quickly, and the land-dealer murders might stop, but the weakness of Palestinian democracy and the lack of human rights for the Palestinians will remain a serious problem.

With the launching of the Oslo process, leading to Palestinian elections and the institution of Palestinian rule over almost all of the Palestinian population of the disputed territories, many hoped against hope that the Palestinians would break the mold of their surrounding Arab neighbors. Palestinians, it was said, are the most experienced with democracy, both in Israel and abroad. These hopes are rapidly being dashed.

As Fawaz Turki, a Palestinian writer living in the US, wrote in the *Washington Post*: "... we had no illusions about Yasser Arafat himself ... but we believed that once the institutional machinery of statehood was put in gear, it would be reasonable to suppose that the aggregate complex of popular culture would lead to stability, and finally, meaningful independence. "We were dead wrong. No one could prophesy the true measure of the dissolution of civil society, of civilized norms, of human hope, that was to come."

Turki laments the fact that Arafat's "first order of business" was to stifle the intelligentsia, journalists, human rights activists, and union leaders. He immediately created nine intelligence services and an oversized police force of at least 30,000 men. Turki points out that 14 Palestinians have died under torture "at the hands of thugs ... from the dreaded intelligence services."

It was arguably wishful thinking to think that the same Arafat who has run everything under his control - from the PLO in exile, to southern Lebanon when he was ensconced there - with an iron fist, would change his stripes.

In fact, the conventional wisdom of the peace-makers goes even further: Freedom and democracy are not necessary for peace, and anyone who stops to dwell on them too much is actually putting a stick in the wheel of the peace process.

Despite the lip-service paid to the need for democracy, both Israel and the United States have found the Palestinian dictatorship somewhat of a convenience. Yitzhak Rabin pointed out that the Palestinian fight against terror would not be encumbered, as he was, by a Supreme Court. And the US has been pumping money in to maintain Arafat's bloated police force, with only the most muted complaints that he is using it to turn the autonomous areas into a police state.

The question arises whether democracy and peace can be so neatly separated. In a rare diversion from the orthodoxy on this issue, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told the US Congress last July that democracy is one of the "three pillars" of the peace process. Netanyahu was roundly criticized for slamming the lack of democracy in the Arab world, and for arguing that "States that respect the human rights of their citizens are not likely to provoke hostile action against their neighbors. ... the best guarantor against military adventurism is accountable, democratic government."

"In theory," or "in the long run," or "in a perfect world," the pragmatists respond. Democracy must wait. In their view, Arafat is the ticket to independence, and the price Palestinians must pay is their freedom.

Turki rejects this Faustian bargain.

"One thing is plain," Turki said. "Yasser Arafat has unleashed destructive forces, dug up from the depths of the coercive tradition, that are destined to stifle our dream for living as free men and women. After our costly intifada against those who had occupied our homeland, it now appears that we have to wage another intifada against those who occupy our home."

Maybe it is time for the pragmatists to ask themselves: What is the point of independence without freedom? Does fighting terror really demand a police state, or is a police state more likely to make a deal with terrorists? And if the fight for democracy is not waged now, will it really have a chance after Arafat goes?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EXCELLENT ARTICLES

Sir, - In the Alice-in-Wonderland political scenarios we seem to be condemned to live with in Israel, I usually turn to Amotz Asa-El's Friday column in the *Post* to make some sense of it all and to retain my own sanity. On May 9, following the British elections, he excelled himself.

Those of us who watched with admiration the speedy and efficient change-over of power could not help comparing it to the weeks of wrangling and bargaining that occur after each election here.

Asa-El, by pinpointing all of the Israel Labor Party's outdated dogma, especially in the field of economics, practically challenged Ehud Barak to do a Tony Blair and revamp it into a New Labor to face the challenges ahead.

As one of the "gullible" Asa-El writes about, who voted for Netanyahu, yes, I am envious at the comparison between Tony Blair's clear decisiveness and sense of direction and our prime minister, who seems to stumble along from one makeshift decision to the next, leaning on amateurs for political advisers.

MITZI KLEIN
Jerusalem.

KINDERTRANSPORT PICNIC

Sir, - I should like to draw the attention of all Kindertransportees to our annual picnic, which we are holding this year on Wednesday, May 28, at the Ganei Yehoshua, Hayarkon Park, from around 10 a.m. We would be happy to see new faces, as well as our regular friends. Further details from the Sesslers (04-824-5004) or the undersigned (02-563-4978).

INGE SADAN
Jerusalem.

DOMINICAN TRADITION

Sir, - In his declarations reported in the *Post* of May 8, Stuart Eizenstat, US Commerce Undersecretary, said that "oo country, including the United States, did as much as it might have or should have to save innocent victims of Nazi persecution - Jews, Gypsies, political opponents, and others..."

At the Evian Conference, all nations of the world certainly refused to cooperate on the evacuation of European Jewry, with one exception: the Dominican Republic.

My country offered to receive 100,000 Jews.

The process began and several thousands were saved from the Holocaust, some by coming to Sosúa, where they settled and live till this very day, others by receiving visas or other documentation that allowed them to travel from Europe to other destinations. The size of this program was reduced due to decisions of the Jewish institutions responsible for its implementation.

ALFONSO LOCKWARD,
Ambassador of the Dominican Republic
Tel Aviv.

HIGHWAY SAFETY PRODUCTS

Sir, - On April 2, on our way home from Jerusalem to Petah Tikva driving at 100 km/h, I lost control and struck a lamppost. What should have been a fatal error for both me and my wife, even when wearing seat-belts, turned into an accident where the only damage done was to our vehicle.

Thank God we are alive and well. However, it should be known that it was also the Transport Ministry and the highway engineers at the Public Works Department who saved our lives. It is to their credit that they have, with initiative and foresight, mandated the use of breakaway support bolts for lampposts on intercity roads, thus avoiding fatal accidents and reducing the damage to life and limb. I understand that these support bolts are designed to break away when impacted, allowing the pole to either move with the vehicle that crashed into it, or fall away. Thus the vehicle comes to a gradual safe halt - avoiding an abrupt, sudden, deadly stop.

After my accident, I inquired about highway safety products used on the roads in the US and Europe. I found that, besides breakaway systems for light poles, there is worldwide use of other life-saving installations. Most are sophisticated cushion systems that shield dangerous rigid obstacles like the ends of median barriers, guardrails and overpass-bridge abutments. When a vehicle accidentally crashes into any of them, even at 100 km/h, such a buffer avoids the lethal, crushing, sudden stop that would normally result from impacting the obstacle directly.

All these products are available for use on our highways in Israel, but as yet have not been installed. Who knows how many fatal accidents could be avoided if the Transport Ministry and the PWD, would employ other state-of-the-art innovations in addition to the breakaway system.

RABBI MOSHE LITOFF
Petah Tikva.

OPINION



No place for panic in a crisis

THE Oslo agreement wasn't an American initiative, nor was the US a party to the negotiations that led up to it. Only after the agreement was wrapped up did Shimon Peres visit then secretary of state Warren Christopher and request that the signing be done under American auspices.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Christopher's successor, is quite correct in sticking with the concept that the arrangements on implementing Oslo should also be primarily left to Israel and the Palestinians - in other words, that the US should not try and impose a settlement.

Israel should welcome Albright's statement that the settlement of the dispute is, first and foremost, the two sides' responsibility. After all, the principle that has guided Israeli governments throughout the years has been that only direct negotiations with the Arabs can lead to a lasting peace.

But some among us panicked. They thought Albright was hinting that American involvement in the peace process was winding down. Their fear is that without American activism, the negotiations will come to an abrupt halt. They also theorize that American involvement formed the basis of our peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan.

Now America's contribution to peace with those countries must not be underestimated; but in each case it was Israel that initiated the breakthrough.

Though Anwar Sadat spoke before the Knesset almost a year before Camp David, there were direct Israeli-Egyptian negotiations in Morocco even before Sadat visited Israel.

And as for Jordan, we may believe King Hussein, who in 1996 said in a speech in Tel Aviv that he had got a peace treaty with Israel without any mediators at all. In any case, the panic-mongers can calm down. Though the Clinton administration has altered its foreign policy priorities slightly and the Middle East no longer tops the list, the US remains the

phone call from Israel - started on the initiative that resulted in the Madrid conference.

In the preceding negotiations, the secretary promised that Israel's dealings with the Arab countries would be direct and bilateral. He even backed off from a suggestion that Israel hold talks with the Palestinians in Cairo, something that caused the Israelis

civilian talks at Wye Plantation, but this did not, in the end, serve to advance matters.

RECENTLY the Palestinians have again been maneuvering for American involvement in what are supposed to be bilateral talks. Contrary to what Oslo lays down, they have refused to meet Israeli representatives without an active US presence.

Even where the talks focus on security issues, they demand that CIA representatives be there. Yasser Arafat even sent a letter to President Clinton requesting that the US become especially involved in the current crisis.

All this has one aim: to get the Americans to impose their will on Israel, in the (Palestinian) hope of an Israeli-US rift.

Oslo didn't break down because of any lack of trust between Israel and the Palestinians, as Ambassador Martin Indyk has said. It broke down because of the Palestinians' conviction that direct US involvement in the bilateral negotiations is the fly that will pollute the ointment of broad strategic Israel-US understanding. This is Arafat's hidden agenda in the discussions on resuming negotiations.

In this context, Albright's statement coincides with Israel's interests. Which means Israel must do everything in its power to beef up the special US role of facilitator, and not "impose." In the peace process...

"Above all, Israel must not allow the European Union and the Russians to elbow the Americans off the floor.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

The US cannot and will not abandon its role in the peace process: helping the parties solve their differences

only superpower. As such, it neither can nor will abdicate its responsibility for peace in the Middle East.

In June 1990, secretary of state James Baker tried to provoke Israel, saying he had given up pushing for peace between us and our neighbors. When Israel was serious, he said, it should pick up the phone.

Baker's memoirs reveal that this media play was thought up by *New York Times* journalist Tom Friedman. As a passing gimmick, it raised a few smiles; but subsequent events showed Baker hadn't picked a very good time for jokes at Israel's expense, certainly not for threats.

Following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, the US was forced to address the region's problems rather more seriously. After Iraq's defeat, Baker - without waiting any longer for that

to bribe.

The conference, convened at the end of October 1991, brought positive results. The Arab world agreed to the principle of direct talks, something Israel had fought for in the UN for years.

In the same year, when direct talks with Syria and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation were transferred to Washington, Israel insisted that they be held without an American presence. And a breakthrough, an agenda that included a clause on peace, was achieved with the Jordanians, with no Americans in the room.

But when Israel tried to raise the level of representation in its talks with the Syrians and hold a meeting between the two army chiefs of staff, direct negotiations faltered. A third party, the US, entered the picture.

There was also active American involvement in the subsequent

'Honest broker' pulls a fast one

IT is no secret that the US opposes the settlements. It is also not happy about Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem, and scores of other matters.

But as the so-called "honest broker" in the Arab-Israeli conflict, it has no business trying to undermine Israel's negotiating position - and with false data at that.

But that's exactly what it did when it passed information to David Makovsky that resulted in a story on the front page of *Ha'aretz's* May 20 issue claiming that 26 percent of housing units in West Bank settlements are empty.

Nobody is perfect, but as Peace Now's political secretary Mossy Raz told me, "It is possible to make many mistakes innocently, even easier to make them with evil intent."

Raz termed the American estimates of vacant housing in the settlements "ridiculous."

"There is a person in the US east Jerusalem consulate, Bill Roebuck. His job is to cover the issue of the settlements, and this is what he does. He is a serious worker, and every time we publish something, he contacts us to ask about every piece of data. I can't believe that it is his duty, because his work is very serious."

While Peace Now has every interest in supporting such American claims, Raz candidly admits that only the settlements in the hinterlands, far from the Green Line, have a significant number of empty homes.

Raz isn't alone. According to Yehiel Leiter of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, "All the reporters who cover the territories are rolling on the floor laughing. They can't believe the Americans would put out information that is so obviously wrong."

Mistakes can happen. So when US Consul-General Edward Abington met with reporters later in the day, there was every reason to expect a graceful withdrawal. Instead Abington opted to publicly embrace the numbers. America is clearly more interested in the propaganda value of the report than in its accuracy.

The US may think that ends justify means, but sacrificing the

truth on the altar of convenience does have its costs.

Rather than encouraging Israeli concessions, the American fabrication serves to bolster the argument against taking any "risks for peace" that might increase Israel's dependence on America.

After all, if the Americans deny the obvious, what will they do when faced with such "inconvenient" evidence as Syrian troop movements toward a future demilitarized Golan?

The current propaganda campaign is only one part of a larger approach which, ultimately, is anti-peace. For while the US has focused its spy satellites and devoted precious man hours to counting the supposedly empty houses in Ariel, it seems to be doing nothing about Palestinian activity that could topple the peace process.

OF COURSE there are limits to the abilities of intelligence. As Brig.-Gen. (res.) Aharon Levran,

turning the safe bypass roads into gauntlets of rocks and firebombs. And America remains silent.

Because for America, the only illegal construction that matters is Jewish construction, regardless of its impact on security.

Will America's pressure/pro propaganda campaign work against Prime Minister Netanyahu? That's up to him.

As former ambassador to the US Zalman Shoval notes, there's no comparison between the situation now and the pressure secretary of state John Foster Dulles and president Dwight Eisenhower put on Israel to withdraw unilaterally after the Sinai Campaign of 1956.

True, Israel did eventually pull out, but only after the Soviet Union threatened war, and America made it clear that it had no intention of helping.

And while there may be talk today of reducing American aid, in 1956 Eisenhower was seriously considering dropping the tax deduction for contributions to the UJA.

Even then, facing the world, Israel did not fold completely to America's dictate. As Howard M. Sachar writes (*In Egypt and Israel*, 1981), Dulles wanted an Israeli withdrawal not just from Sinai but from part of the Negev, as part of an early version of "land for peace."

It took the Americans years to accept the armistice lines of 1949 as Israel's permanent frontiers.

One thing is certain. If America really wants to be an "honest broker," it should steer clear of the kind of nonsense it tried to palm off as fact this week. Being "even-handed" doesn't mean handicapping Israel.

The writer is director of *IMRA*, *Independent Media Review & Analysis*.

POSTSCRIPTS

THE MAYOR of the Indonesian town of Solo threatened to take political rivals to court if they do not repaint sidewalks and trees in a city square in the ruling party's color.

As part of their birthday celebrations, members of the Moslem-oriented United Development Party (PPP) recently painted the public objects white after the local government had earlier painted them yellow

— the colour of the ruling Golkar party.

This is the authority of the local government and if they want to change it they must ask permission," Mayor Imam Sutopo said.

The colourful protest was part of ongoing concern within the two sanctioned minority parties about the "yellowization" program of some local government officials.

THIS STORY is almost too good to be true, but the source claims it has been authenticated by the US Navy. It ran in the Canadian publication *Word Watching*.

A radio conversation between a US ship and a Canadian source off the coast of Newfoundland proceeded as follows:

VOICE 1: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision.

VOICE 2: Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees.

VOICE 1: This is the captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert your course.

VOICE 2: No, I say divert your course.

VOICE 1: This is an aircraft carrier of the US Navy. We are a large warship. Divert your course now!

VOICE 2: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

When you call for unity, you aren't saying uniformity

Many Israelis today are of the opinion that the rifts within the Jewish population, most specifically between those who are - perhaps misleadingly - termed "secular" and the religiously observant, are deeper, more serious and potentially more harmful to our society as a whole than the ongoing conflict between Israel and its neighbors.

The unrestrained viciousness of the verbal and physical violence aroused by the dispute over Shabbat traffic on Jerusalem's Bar-Ilan Street was more appalling than the riots in Hebron, even though no shots were fired. The horror inspired by it was all the greater because this was an interethnic conflict, Jew pitted against Jew, "brother" against "brother."

Our society today is indeed splintered. Secular and observant have virtually nothing in common except their nationality.

Even those who serve in the Israel Defense Forces - long considered a unifying factor - frequently serve in separate units and frameworks, such as the *hesder* program, which enables men to combine yeshiva study with military service, or the soldier-teacher units for young women. Religious youth who join the Nahal do so separately from nonreligious.

We live in separate neighborhoods, creating ghettos in which outsiders feel uncomfortable, or even at risk if they do not meet the sartorial requirements of the residents.

And, above all, our children are separated from early childhood onwards. This separation during the most formative years of life, to my mind, is at the root of the problem.

As soon as social consciousness begins, we learn to distinguish between ourselves and the

"other," the outsider, the alien, the potential opponent. Not only is this true for Jews and Arabs, where the total difference of culture and religion may justify separation on the grounds that it facilitates autonomy and independence, it is, sadly, as true for Jews.

What Jewish children learn about their Jewish identity and how they learn it depends on whether their parents have registered them in the state system, the state-religious system, or the so-called independent haredi system.

It isn't too late for Jews of every sort to work toward tolerance. But first comes knowledge of our heritage, our texts

Ironically, whereas in the Eretz Israel of Mandatory times graduates of Jewish schools were well-versed in the Bible, had a fair grounding in Talmud, knew their Hebrew calendar and celebrated Jewish festivals (though often, especially in the kibbutz movement, very differently from the Diaspora mode of celebration, stressing the festivals' connection to the land, the seasons, the first fruits and the harvest), pupils in today's state system are ignorant of Jewish ritual. They know little or nothing of oral law, and have skimpy knowledge of even the Bible.

We are no longer the People of the Book. Select portions of the population have, as it were, hijacked Judaism. The majority - alienated by the politicization of religion and the growing fundamentalism of the haredi sector - are far too ready to abdicate their birthright.

Wrongly perceiving the extremist behavior of the religious Right as typical mainstream Judaism, they prefer to have no link with it. And so we become two peoples - at least. Many would say we are even more splintered.

FORTUNATELY, there is a great deal of activity afoot which is calculated to bring about a transformation, to restore the Jewish heritage to all Jews, rather than having it remain the prerogative of a minority.

We are witnessing a flowering of institutions for adult Jewish education, many of which attract artists, writers, white-collar professionals, media workers, even educators - those who can help propagate further what they themselves have acquired.

A number of schools are devising modes of modifying, even eliminating, existing barriers between children from religiously-observant families and those whose parents are not halachically observant.

Various models which currently exist are proving extremely popular with parents who not only want their children to be knowledgeable, informed Jews, but want them also to be acquainted with and tolerant of different lifestyles.

One model has two schools - one from the state system, the other state-religious - sharing a campus and conducting joint

extracurricular activities. Another has observant and non-observant children studying together in the same class. In some cases, two schools arrange for weekly joint study sessions on topics related to Judaism and religion.

It is heartwarming to see differences overcome, to observe people coming to grips with the great classical texts Judaism has bequeathed to modern culture, to witness children (and adults) who give very different outer expression to their Judaism growing increasingly aware of the fact that we are, after all, one people.

It is heartwarming to see them begin to realize that what we have in common and what should bind us is precisely our common heritage, our common language, our "Jewish bookcase," our texts, our common history; and that this holds true whether we are believers or nonbelievers (and I would venture to suggest that there are comparatively few total non-believers), whether we practice the commandments or not, whether we are, to use a term current in the US, FFB ("from birth") or BT (*ba'alei teshuva*, returnees to the fold), Orthodox, Conservative or Reform.

Judaism is itself, after all, tolerant of heterodoxy: "The Torah has 70 faces." The basis of Talmud is dispute and debate.

But first one must know the text. Though Judaism can tolerate the skeptic, the *apikoros*, it has no patience for the ignoramus, the *am ha'aretz*.

The writer is chairperson of the Israel Women's Network.



Spooked by the haredim

Dan Izenberg has seen a ghost - the ghost of Torah Judaism - which, it was once assumed, would soon fade away. Instead, 17 percent of Israelis, according to a poll taken this month by Mina Tzemah, say they have become more religious in recent years.

Like a boy whistling as he passes the graveyard, Izenberg, in his recent series in this paper on *hozrim b'teshuva*, portrays this phenomenon as confined to the poor, uneducated and dysfunctional elements of society. His ostensible aim is to sound the alarm against haredi activists preying on the vulnerable in Israel's poor neighborhoods, ripping young children from their mothers.

But Izenberg's real purpose is to assure himself that Judaism is only for primitives. Better to carry on Jewishly illiterate, secure in the knowledge that the Torah was surely all refuted decades ago, than to confront the Torah intellectually.

The facts, however, will not fit Izenberg's sociological reductionism.

When I entered Ohr Somayach yeshiva 18 years ago, I was surrounded by top graduates of the world's leading universities - Harvard, Yale, Oxford, et al. (They are still there today.) In those days, groups of Israeli soldiers visited the yeshiva regularly to talk with students, attend a class or two, and, in general, have their stereotypes of the Torah and its adherents challenged.

The visits, however, came to an abrupt halt when the IDF found that even a lifetime of anti-religious indoctrination was insufficient inoculation against a few hours of intellectual challenge. Too many officers were becoming religious.

(Amnon Danker lamented in *Ha'aretz* at the time that he was left alone, like the last apple hanging precariously from the tree, as all his friends - "the cream of Israeli society" - became religious.)

Unable to prevail in intellectual combat, the secular world fled from the encounter.

In place of debate, the media conducted a hysteria campaign, describing the *ba'al teshuva*

YONOSON ROSENBLUM

yeshivot as home to cults. Leading the campaign was Dan Mahler, head of Parents Against Teshuva (now the Association to Fight Haredi Domination), who has resurfaced as Izenberg's principal source for the current series.

Embittered that his son, today a respected Torah educator, had become religious despite his "posh" upbringing and service in an elite army unit, Mahler cried

Unable to prevail in intellectual combat, the secular world has fled from the encounter

foul all the way to the Knesset. He knew that Ohr Somayach was no cult headquarters. He knew that his son had at all times been free to come and go as he wished, and that he was never deprived of sleep or subjected to love-bombing, only to the rigorous discipline of Talmud study.

But Mahler would not admit then, or now, that he had been defeated intellectually.

Izenberg's case against the current *teshuva* movement is rife with crude ethnic stereotyping; every observation is given a sinister twist.

If a former POW's description of his religious awakening is emotionally powerful, or if another haredi speaker has a sense of humor, that is somehow malevolent. So is giving Cremlon treats to kids in shul.

Yes, Amnon Yitzhak, just one out of dozens of well-known speakers, describes Hell graphically, albeit amusingly - but then so did Dante. Was he a primitive too? Is it more sophisticated to believe that God created a world in which the wicked prosper without being called to judgment?

One of Izenberg's articles concludes ominously that the "movement's operative strategy" includes telling people to take on observance step by step. True. It is cults that do the opposite. Izenberg admits that all

Mahler's efforts to find one parent to bring suit against those who helped their children become religious have been in vain. And over five long articles, he did not manage to interview one adult *ba'al teshuva*, even though adults make up the overwhelming majority of today's *teshuva* movement.

Surely some discussion of their lives prior to becoming religious, compared to their lives today, would be germane to any evaluation of the *teshuva* movement.

HAD Izenberg really wished to expose naked religious coercion, he would have been better advised to examine the techniques used to turn the parents and grandparents of today's *ba'alei teshuva* away from religion in the '50s: Youth Aliya's separation of North African children from their parents, the denial of Histadrut work permits to parents who enrolled their children in religious schools, the enforced cutting of Yemenite children's sidelocks. (There were no Knesset committees then to hear the tearful testimony of mothers whose children were no longer religious.)

Or Izenberg could have examined the Christian missionary work that has gone on unimpeded for 50 years in poor neighborhoods, and which invariably involves cash payments to parents for their children.

Izenberg takes a dim view of the haredi community's refusal to confine its efforts to potential Talmud scholars alone.

I, however, am inspired by the hundreds of haredi men and women who devote a night a week to visiting and learning with non-religious Jews in their homes. For them the command to "Love your friend as yourself" requires sharing their most precious possession, the Torah, with their fellow Jews.

Today, any Jew in Israel who wants to discuss evolution, archeology, or the meaning of life, or who wants to study any aspect of the Torah, can find a religious Jew eager to talk or learn with him. Now that's a story.

The writer is the author of numerous biographies of modern Jewish leaders and Israel correspondent for the Jewish Observer.

Legal fictions and the role of the Righteous Jew

If Ya'acov Ne'eman really thinks that the Justice Ministry staff is not prepared to countenance a minister who wears a *kippa*, as he has charged, it is hard to believe that he would be interested in his reappointment.

If he doesn't think that, but nevertheless made the accusation, it is impossible to consider him a suitable justice minister.

Prime Minister Netanyahu could sensibly discharge any personal obligation to Ne'eman by appointing him finance minister. Ne'eman once served as director-general of that ministry, and tax law is his professional specialty.

Dan Meridor would then return to the Justice Ministry, which should have been his in the first place.

Still, Netanyahu's initial choice of Ne'eman, who is identified with the National Religious Party and has strong personal ties with the Shas leadership, had a certain logic to it.

The same reasoning seems to have led Supreme Court President Aharon Barak to propose nominating a leading religious court judge to the Supreme Court.

Building a bridge between the religious and secular legal systems appears to be the aim of both Netanyahu and Barak. But is this the way to do it?

The issue goes beyond politics. Indeed, the politically sensational aspects of the problem are not necessarily the most significant. Similarly, the high-profile

ATTEMPTS to appoint a religious jurist as minister of justice or a religious court judge to the Supreme Court are not necessarily the most important developments. Somehow, they ring false. Surgical grafting is not the way change comes in a legal system.

Far more impressive is the agreement between the Absorption Ministry and the Chief Rabbinate to open special conver-

sion classes for immigrants from the former Soviet Union. The importance of the agreement lies in the confidence of Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein that the graduates of the program will be speedily converted.

How would the immigrants comply with the demand that they maintain an observant lifestyle? Edelstein was asked. He replied that he was convinced the rabbinate wouldn't make problems.

"The religious factions," he observed, "would not want to create a situation where thousands of graduates of the ulpan for studying Judaism are demonstrating opposition to the Absorption Ministry because the religious courts are

stalling on their conversions, especially against the background of the controversy over the conversion bill."

EDELSTEIN'S remarks point up the importance of political reality, to which the rabbinate is not insensitive.

Implicit in the agreement, so Edelstein apparently believes, is the willingness of the rabbinate to accept study in the religious ulpan as a fulfillment of the undertaking to maintain an observant lifestyle.

This, of course, is a legal fiction. But it is through legal fictions that an immutable legal system, like Halacha, can adapt to changing circumstances. Essentially the formality, not the substance, is immutable.

The same process appears to be working in some instances with regard to the conversion of non-Jewish adopted children. Here again, the formality, an undertaking on the part of the non-observant adopting parents to raise the children in an observant lifestyle, is insisted upon.

Sometimes it must be reinforced

by a guarantee by someone who is himself observant that the parents' obligation will be fulfilled. Here a crucial role is played by a Righteous Jew, who, like the Righteous Gentile, is prepared to bend the truth in order to save a Jewish family.

The entire procedure is an elaborate legal fiction whose purpose is to permit change, while preserving the immutable formal requirements of rabbinic law.

In time, the problem of non-Orthodox conversions will be solved by a suitable legal fiction.

The Orthodox establishment will insist on the preservation of its monopoly. However, it will be prepared, in effect, to rubber-stamp non-Orthodox conversions, if they meet certain agreed minimal requirements.

This use of legal fiction, as former Supreme Court justice Haim H. Cohn points out in a seminal essay, "Legal Change in Unchangeable Law: The Talmudic Pattern," has a celebrated history in the development of Jewish law. It is part of the system. Change will come from within the system itself.

"The whole process," Cohn concludes, "reflects the evolution from the humanly divine to the divinely human."

In the Israeli reality, he might have added, political pressures help the process along.

The writer is a legal and political commentator.

Changing the system from within - an 'evolution from the humanly divine to the divinely human'

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WORLD

in brief

National Party renegade starts new party

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — The former leading moderate in the National Party that enforced decades of apartheid announced yesterday he formed a new political movement.

Roelf Meyer, 50, who last week resigned from the National Party, said his move had already generated a positive reaction from financial sources. "The so-called silent majority, it seems, is starting to be heard," he said.

Six of the National Party's 11-member youth committee resigned this week in support of Meyer's move. Former apartheid-era foreign minister Pik Botha, who resigned from the National Party last year, also said he would be interested in working with Meyer.

Algeria car-bomb kills nine

PARIS (Reuters) — A car bomb killed nine people and wounded 33 yesterday in Boufarik, 25 km south of the capital Algiers, the official Algerian news agency APS said.

2 killed in Philippine clash, 21 dead

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) — A soldier and a militiaman were killed in the latest clashes in a military offensive against Moslem rebels in the southern Philippines, bringing the death toll to 21, the military said yesterday. The offensive against Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Abu Sayyaf rebels in Basilan province started three weeks ago after residents complained of rebel extortion and harassment.

In the latest fatal clash, an army sergeant and a militia commander were killed in a 30-minute gunfight that began when government troops encountered Abu Sayyaf fighters in a mountain village.

Angry Yeltsin fires defense minister

MOSCOW (AP) — President Boris Yeltsin fired his defense minister yesterday after complaining the military had failed to carry out reforms, including plans to axe hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

Defense Minister Igor Rodionov was dismissed at a meeting of the National Defense Council at which Yeltsin lashed out at the military high command for resisting reforms. Liberals have been demanding major military reforms and cuts, but many generals insist Russia must retain a huge force.

"I am not just unsatisfied, I am outraged by the course of reform in the army," said Yeltsin.

Yeltsin also dismissed the army's top commander, Gen. Viktor Samsonov, head of the general staff. Gen. Igor Sergeev, the head of rocket forces, was named acting defense minister.

The Russian armed forces are in chaos, with officers and soldiers going months without pay or proper rations. The military has received few new weapons in recent years and its combat ability has all but collapsed.

At the same time, several top generals have been dismissed and arrested for embezzling millions of dollars and other crimes.

Yeltsin complained soldiers lack many basic things, at a time when the army leadership was refusing to reduce the number of generals, who enjoy many privileges.

"You have reached the stage when you lack plates and spoons (for your soldiers) and you are still persistently balking at cutting your personnel," an angry Yeltsin told Rodionov.

Yeltsin had ordered the military to streamline and become a smaller, more modern force. He complained the high command had resisted cuts and other economies.



Igor Rodionov (Reuters)

"I have a very low estimate of your work in this direction. I am not satisfied and I have to draw the necessary conclusions," Yeltsin told Rodionov. "Nothing has been done."

Rodionov's dismissal comes amid a major debate over the future of the Russian military.

Liberals in the Kremlin want a smaller, professional and modernized military. But such a force would be more expensive because of its need for advanced equipment and skilled personnel.

Many generals argue that since Russia does not have the funds for a Western-style military, it must retain large numbers of troops to ensure national security. Some critics say the generals want a larger military to ensure their own positions are not eliminated.

Rodionov, 60, had proposed swiftly cutting 300,000 servicemen from the 1.7 million-man army. But he moved slowly in implementing the long-awaited reforms, seeking to satisfy Yeltsin and generals opposed to the cuts.

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The Family

Kurd protesters riot at UN

News agencies

GENEVA (Reuters) — Some 200 Kurdish demonstrators stormed the United Nations' European headquarters in Geneva yesterday, demanding international action to halt Turkey's offensive into northern Iraq.

The protesters, mainly men but including some women and at least one child, rushed past security guards at the main gate and forced their way into the main building of the UN's Palais des Nations, smashing glass doors.

"We demand action by the United Nations and the international community to halt the massacre of our people in northern Iraq," said Argun Leman. "The Turks have killed over 100 civilians, including many women and

children. Why is nothing being done to stop them?"

He said condemnation of the Turkish action by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was "not enough for us."

The demonstrators occupied a reception hall normally used as the main entrance for high-level visitors, chanting slogans, brandishing red flags and banners, and dancing.

One banner read: "War for Kuwait, Silence for Kurdistan. Why the double game?"

A delegation was received by Mohammed Sebi, the Moroccan chief of general services for the UN administration in Geneva, and another was taken to the UN Human Rights Center in the sprawling 1930s complex.

More than 10,000 Turkish troops, allied with the local Kurdish Democratic Party

(KDP), poured into northern Iraq last week in pursuit of activists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) who want a separate state in Turkey.

The troops were reported yesterday to be 200 km inside northern Iraq. Many of Turkey's Western allies have criticized the action, in which Ankara says 1,446 PKK fighters have been killed.

The Geneva protesters, who said they came from all over Switzerland, declared they would stay in the building until the UN stopped the Turks.

Several of them were brandishing PKK banners as they tried to rush up stairs to the office of UN Director-General in Geneva Vladimir Petrovsky, once a deputy foreign minister of the old Soviet Union, who is currently out of

the country. Swiss police said they were in contact with the UN authorities but could not intervene without a formal request from officials of the world body. However, police sources said a riot squad was on standby.

In Istanbul, a group of internationalist students attacked leftist students who protesting Turkey's offensive against the Kurds.

Eight students and a police officer were injured. Two of the students suffered gunshot wounds while another one was stabbed.

The students were attacking each other with clubs and stones. Police fired into the air to disperse the students at Istanbul University campus, but it was not clear if the wounded students were injured by stray bullets, fired by the police. Some 27 students were detained.

Iranian voters choose today

By ANWAR FARUQI

TEHRAN (AP) — The campaign for the Iranian presidency drew to a close on the eve of today's election after thousands rallied in Tehran for candidate Mohammad Khatami, seen as a reformer who would try to limit the power of the clergy.

His main rival is the hardline speaker of parliament, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, who has the clergy's backing.

They are competing in the most keenly fought campaign for president since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

Two other candidates also are vying in the race to replace President Hashemi Rafsanjani, a moderate who must step down in August after two four-year terms.

Everyone over 15 can vote in the election, making some 33 million of Iran's 60 million people eligible to vote.

In the capital's Tajrish Square, dozens of young volunteers handed out leaflets and portraits of Khatami. Many had been in the streets all night, clipping color portraits of Khatami beneath the windshield wipers of passing cars and urging drivers "Vote for Khatami, he's our man." Many — especially among the young — hope that Khatami will bring a more relaxed interpretation of Islam to the job if he is elected.

"I want Khatami to win because I want to continue wearing my blue jeans," said Amir-Reza Fattouhi, 21, a university student. Khatami, 54, a former culture minister, faces a strong challenge from the hardline parliament speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri. Nateq-Nouri, also 54, has the backing of rich merchants and the powerful clergy, which has threatened to prevent Khatami from winning at all costs.

Nateq-Nouri also has the tacit backing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who as Iran's supreme spiritual leader has the final word on all things in the country. The president is responsible for the day-to-day running of the country.

Khatami is riding high on people power — some of it focused on the automobile. Two young women, in modest Islamic smocks and headscarves, cruised the streets of Tehran in their white Renault,



An Iranian woman passes posters depicting presidential candidate Mohammed Khatami in Tehran yesterday. (Reuters)

handing out leaflets and urging people to vote.

"A better tomorrow for Islamic Iran," say the color campaign portraits of Khatami pasted to walls.

Giant yellow banners with Nateq-Nouri's painted portraits hang in several major squares in Tehran, Khatami's portraits are taped on just about every other car in the traffic-jammed streets — even on some front windshields.

The gray Nissan Patrol that Khatami has used as his campaign bus is covered with dents and scratches from the crush of the crowds he has drawn.

Some 10,000 people shouting "Khatami! Khatami!" packed the Afsariyeh mosque in western Tehran Wednesday, while thousands more spilled out onto the streets at his last big rally.

Life on Mars claim disputed

NEW YORK (AP) — A new study contradicts NASA scientists' claim that a meteorite holds microscopic traces of long-ago life on Mars.

In a paper published yesterday, researchers from the University of Hawaii present electron microscope images of the meteorite, known as ALH84001. It was that meteorite that NASA used last

year to show that there had been life on Mars.

According to their interpretation of those pictures, the alleged traces of life were formed not by ancient organisms, but by the huge shock that sent the rock hurtling into space millions of years ago.

Edward Scott, a professor at Hawaii's Institute of Geophysics and Planetology, examined along a tiny sliver of the Martian meteorite. In the sample were tiny grains of carbonate, the same kind of mineral put forth by the NASA group as a sign that microbes once lived in the rock.

Examination under an electron microscope suggests the carbonate grains were formed from a hot, pressurized fluid squirted into fractures in the surrounding rock.

That would have happened during the impact that knocked the meteorite off Mars, sending it hurtling through space and ultimately to the Antarctic ice cap, where it is thought to have lain for at least 10,000 years before researchers scooped it up and delivered it to NASA, the US

space agency.

Most researchers familiar with the fist-sized meteorite agree the grains were created during the impact that launched the rock into space. But few support Scott's contention in the British journal *Nature* that it invalidates the NASA researchers' claim.

"I think that he's made some real interesting observations, but I think he's missing half the story," said Allan Treiman, a research scientist at the Lunar and Planetary Institute in Houston.

The problem is that Scott and his colleagues, Akira Yamaguchi and Alexander Krot, didn't have in their sample the carbonate globules touted by the NASA scientists as remnants of ancient microbes.

The Hawaiian group argues that chemical similarities between the globules and the tiny grains they examined show they were formed by the same process. But many don't accept that argument.

"He's talking about oranges — we're talking about apples," said Everett Gibson, one of the NASA scientists.

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Is Uncle Sam tired of the Mideast?

If the US intensifies its involvement, it's not clear who will pay the price – Israel or the Palestinians, reports Hillel Kuttler from Washington

Go, assess. Go, assess. Go, assess. That was the stated procedure before each of US special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross's recent trips to the region. And it now has people here scratching their heads, pondering what there is to calculate when the key variable remains unchanged: Israel and the Palestinians are still not on speaking terms.

Predictably, there are plenty of Washington analysts calling for an intensified American role in light of the failure of Washington's perceived kid-gloves treatment. Such increased activity means pressuring Israel to curb settlements and accept the principle of not altering the status quo in Jerusalem and elsewhere.

Cairo's ambassador here, for example, calls "noonsense" the US's pattern of trips and evaluations on where things stand. "The Americans don't do anything. That's the problem. They keep trying to revive the process and they don't look at why it's in bad shape. They just want people to meet," says Ahmed Maher el-Sayed.

"The first trip, the second trip, it was announced the peace team would go and make a report to President Clinton and then decide on an initiative. What's new? How long will they be listening to the people and not talking? I want to see an American role that is more active, that is opinionated and in conformity with the understanding of the obligations of both parties, and not just conveying messages."

A counterweight develops along the lines of what Secretary of State Madeleine Albright articulated during Foreign Minister David Levy's visit last Friday: that the parties must "really make some of the decisions that are required" before she agrees to travel to the region.

It sounds like a faint echo of former secretary of state James Baker's lie that Israel should

call him when it gets serious about peace.

Albright's warning, along with Ambassador to Israel Mario Indyk's comments Sunday about the "core bargain" of the Oslo process disintegrating, leads some to fear that the US is withdrawing a bit.

Some, like former National Security Council official Richard Haass, attribute the US's troubles to its not having "adjusted adequately" to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's election and "not putting down markers privately to what it wants to see or not see."

Administration officials say that while Israeli-Palestinian relations are dire, the US still has a crucial job to do and refuses to throw up its arms in despair – not even following PA chairman Yasser Arafat's rebuff of Ross and his critical letter to Clinton complaining of Ross's ineffectiveness.

"The rhetoric isn't new, and it's just rhetoric. It's a game, and we know it's a game and I'd like to dismiss it now," a US official said of the Arafat missive. "I don't give it credence. They [the PA] don't expect us to. It's a pressure tactic and we ignore it. It's an exercise and they know it."

Asked whether the peace team is considering adopting a lower profile, the US official said:

"The Americans don't do anything. That's the problem. They keep trying to revive the process and they don't look at why it's in bad shape."

—Egyptian Ambassador to the US Ahmed Maher el-Sayed

"We certainly haven't said that. We've made clear as long as the parties want us involved, we have a commitment to the process. We still are involved. We don't see an alternative that

near-consensus in Washington: "The idea of pullback, pull-in, pull-out is not the right prism to look at US policy. You don't get more involved or less involved in NATO; you are NATO."

That is precisely the attitude that has academic problem solvers concerned because they

is acceptable." Or, as Robert Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, says, voicing a

say it perpetuates the unhealthy image of the US as indispensable player.

"When the US acts as a facilitator, people begin to orient toward them as either the promises of threats or rewards. But what produced Oslo was not Madrid [the 1991 peace conference], but independent facilitators," states professor Richard Rubenstein of George Mason University's Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, located in suburban Washington.

"I think there may be some limitations and obstacles now taken over the facilitation. You get into the power mode where everyone looks to Big Daddy."

Rubenstein believes that it would be in the interest of Israel, the PA and Washington for the US to "back off." He says that because the US is primarily concerned with advancing its own interests in the

region, there are bound to be clashes with the principals. "They might be able to [negotiate] themselves even though

seriously or was just a tactic – could backfire by bringing American pressure to bear on the Palestinian leader rather than

Arafat's appeal for greater US involvement could backfire by bringing American pressure to bear on the Palestinian leader rather than on his target, Prime Minister Netanyahu.

the US might not like it," says Rubenstein. "[The Americans] seem to assume that they can make it all happen, that if they're not running the peace process, there is no peace process."

In fact, there are those who believe that Arafat's appeal for greater US involvement – whether it was meant to be taken

on his target, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

"One gets the sense he feels himself immune, that heightened [US] engagement is a code word for increased persuasive efforts on the Israelis," says Satloff.

If the US adopts the read-the-riot-act role that ambassador Maher and others advocate,

according to Satloff, its priority should instead be to "signal, in no uncertain terms, that heightened engagement means increased pressure on Arafat, and that he would be much the wiser to take advantage of [Ross's] low-key, dispassionate efforts."

Furthermore, argues Marius Deeb, a professor at Johns Hopkins University's School for Advanced International Studies, Arafat would be best served by abandoning appeals to the US and instead addressing Israel's security needs as a necessary condition for progress.

For one reason, Deeb and others say, the US, all the way up to Clinton and Albright, is not inclined to assume a more activist role in foreign affairs anyway.

For another, if Arafat is not careful, he could box himself into a corner, as he did last year.

"Arafat cannot have his cake and eat it. There has to be security, then he will have the trust of the Israelis," says Deeb.

"But ... by threatening [and] using language allowing those [terrorist] organizations to operate, he can end up with another four years of the Netanyahu administration. It's in his interest to [compromise] in the long run."

To be sure, Satloff is almost a lone voice in Washington advocating strong-arm tactics not on Netanyahu but on Arafat. Satloff is taken aback by the ado about Arafat's latest antics.

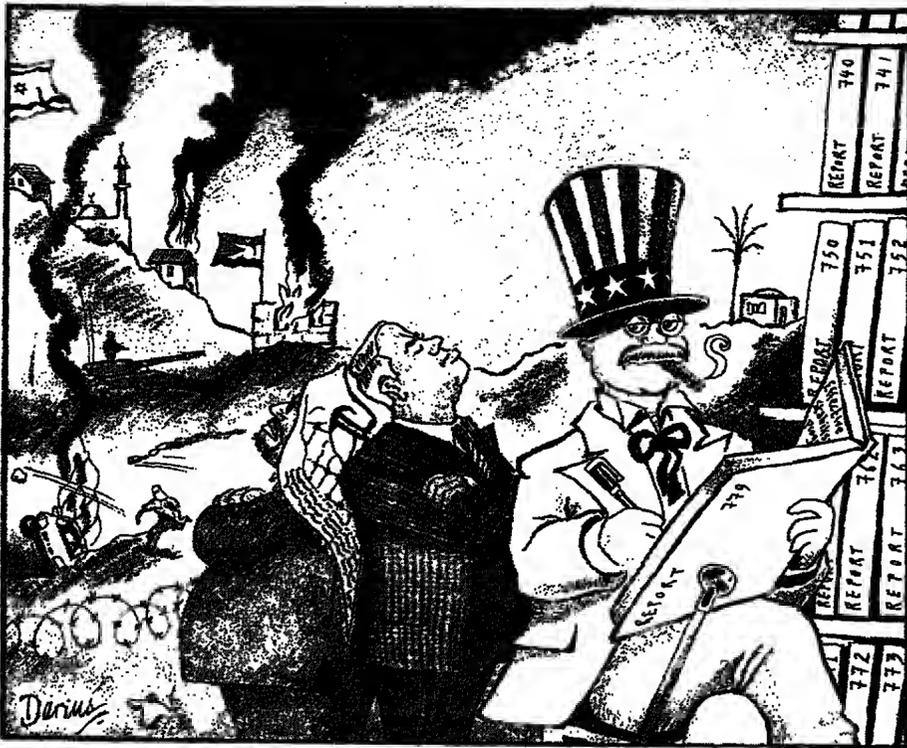
"Someone looking at this from Mars is not going to understand how this got out of hand," he says.

"What Arafat needs to know is that any appeal to a higher authority means he will pay a price, that if the secretary or president get more involved, he will pay a price because he is the most egregious violator of the accords."

To the basic question – do the Palestinians have a legitimate grievance over the US's handling of the process and of Israel? – Satloff scoffs.

"On the contrary. It's one of the more remarkable bits of cheek for Yasser Arafat, head of an erstwhile terrorist organization, to question the bona fides of the personal envoy of the president of the United States. It's quite clear they're testing how far they can go."

"Arafat certainly doesn't expect the president of the United States to say, 'Maybe he's right, that I have been duped by my loyal aide and the gentleman in Gaza has a point.'"



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 Panel 2: Impact of the War: A Panoramic Perspective
 Evening program:
 20:30-22:00 In Memory of Ambassador Meron Gordon
 Fisher Hall, Mishkenot Sha'ananim (in Hebrew)
Wednesday, June 4, 1997, Senate Hall, Mount Scopus, 14:30-16:30
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Death of a land salesman

Selling land to Jews has become the ultimate crime in Palestinian society — one that justifies murder, Jon Immanuel reports

The recent murder of Arabs in retaliation for selling property to Jews is a return to the roots of the Palestinian conflict with Zionism 70 years ago, when absentee landowners would sell Arab property to Jewish settlers. Then, as now, the land dealers acting as middlemen were hunted down by vigilantes, with a nod from Arab leaders.

The recent *farwa* (religious ruling) issued by Akrimah Sabri, the Palestinian Authority-appointed mufti of Jerusalem, refusing Moslem burial to any Arab who sells land to a Jew, echoes that of Amio al-Husseini, mufti of Jerusalem in the 1920s.

And Palestinian society turns its back on the victims. Regulars at the Salah Eddin Street coffee shop frequented by land dealer Farid Bashiti, who was bludgeoned to death near the Ramallah police station with his hands tied and his mouth taped, carry on playing cards at his table.

Harbi Abu Sara, cleared of collaboration by the PA two years ago, is shot four times in the head, and the Palestinian media quote security sources as saying he was a collaborator who sold land to Jews, as though that justifies his murder.

Palestinian human rights groups, which have become the watchdog of PA political development since Oslo, become its guard dog when faced with this issue. Though both murders took place in PA territory, they do not call for an investigation because "we have no proof the PA was involved."

What is more important to them is what they call Israeli hypocrisy. "I think there are regulations preventing Palestinians from buying land on Dizengoff Street in Tel Aviv. Even if an Israeli Arab has

land and wants to return to it, he cannot, but if an Israeli Jew buys land in Hebron, it immediately becomes Israeli," says Issa Shawkil of LAW, the society for the protection of human rights and the environment.

Yet the sale of land to Jews did not begin yesterday, so why has the hunting season reopened now? It's because "the Palestinian public was under the impression that there was a peace process, and that we should solve everything through the peace process, but given the recent developments — lack of progress and a campaign of land acquisition — young activists came to feel that there is still a need for the old methods," said Ghassan Khatib, cultural studies professor at Bir Zeit University and a former peace negotiator.

The anger directed against land dealers might be compared with that of Jews towards Jews suspected of collaborating with the Nazis. Rudolf Kaszmer, for example, was found innocent of such charges, but in a way that suggested the judges agreed with his accusers. He was later shot dead in the street.

The parallel might seem scandalous, but it should be noted that Palestinians consider the loss of land as the heart of their tragedy. Just last week, Yasser Arafat referred to Israel's Independence Day as "the day of the Palestinian Holocaust."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also drew a parallel with the Holocaust, though with the opposite intent. Last week, he described the PA's new policy of executing those selling land to Jews as "anti-Jewish laws that remind us of events from the past that we thought had passed forever."

On Monday he asked: "What would the world say if the Knesset



decided that whoever sells land to Arabs would be put to death?"

Palestinians scoff at such remarks, and at the intention of Cabinet Secretary Danny Navet to complain to the UN Commission on Human Rights about Palestinian racism and antisemitism. The law itself, they note, was passed in Jordan — now considered Israel's closest Arab ally.

"I think Netanyahu is the last person to talk about racist laws, since Israeli law prevents non-Jews from buying land in Israel,"

says Khatib. Dan Yakir, an authority on land law at the Association of Civil Rights in Israel qualifies that by noting there is no Knesset law preventing non-Jews from buying land, "but there is a policy which limits non-Jewish purchase of land."

In fact, there is an absolute ban on selling Jewish National Fund land (which constitutes 12% of the state lands) to non-Jews. Such land is in areas such as Galilee, where Israel is concerned about

Arab predominance. Palestinians argue that even if Israel and the PA had identical laws, the Israeli policy would be racist and the Palestinian policy justified because there is no possibility that land purchased by an Arab in Israel will become part of a Palestinian state. But Palestinians have well-grounded fears that land purchased by Jews across the Green Line will be claimed as part of Israel, especially under the present government. For example,

left-wing Israelis whose grandparents lived in Hebron have expressed a willingness to sell or even donate their family property to the Palestinian Authority, but are not permitted to do so.

Currently, the PA has the legal right to prevent land sales only in areas A and B, covering 30% of the West Bank. It has no power to do so in area C, which is precisely the territory whose political future has yet to be decided.

In Jerusalem, where Jewish demand for land is greatest, the PA has no legal authority to prevent the transfer of property from Palestinian to Jewish and then Israeli ownership. Netanyahu views the Har Homa project, for example, as completely legal under Israeli law because it is inside the boundaries of Jerusalem — on land annexed under Israeli law. Yet, while all of Jerusalem has been annexed by Israel, the Palestinians consider the city, by their reading of the Oslo Accords, to be a still-unresolved political issue.

The Palestinians have also sought to combat Israel's policy on Israeli terms. Businessman Munib Masri has established the Al-Quds Investment Fund, and plans to raise \$200 million across the Arab world to finance land purchases in Jerusalem.

Such attempts have been made before and failed, in part, because of the prohibitively high price of acquiring land. For example, the

villa and five dunams in A-Tur that belonged to Armenian cleric Ashahi Ajamian cost \$10 million. It was bought by an American Jew who transferred the villa to a yeshiva.

When Jewish resolve to buy Arab property is stronger than Arab resolve to keep it, more land-conscious Arabs have nothing to resort to but intimidating the dealers (who, being outside PA control, can only be reached by illegal means).

PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Medein, who announced the death penalty, described the kidnapping of Bashiti as "punishment for treason," even while adding that the PA did not condone it. He added that, in Palestinian eyes, it should also be forbidden for Arabs in Israel to sell land which really belongs to refugees abroad.

However, he recognizes the difference between selling land outside the Green Line and selling land inside it. Where Israel's sovereignty is undisputed, Abu Medein concedes that the legal owner has a right to sell to Israelis.

The problem, he says, is that the rightful owners — often refugees — are being defrauded by unethical relatives. "Their land is sold without their knowledge or even against their will, and this means they have lost any basis on which to claim a right of return or compensation" — issues which, like Jerusalem, are to be decided in final-status talks.

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MIDDLE EAST TERRORISM

Beck Auditorium, Bar-Ilan University

Monday, May 26, 1997
09:15 Greeting: David Rosen, ADL

TERRORISM: STRATEGIC RELEVANCE
Chair: Efraim Inbar, BESA
Paul Wilkinson, St. Andrews College: *The Relationship Between Terrorism and War*
Ehud Sprinzak, Hebrew University: *Terror: The Erosion of Legitimacy*
Yehoshua Dvir, Hebrew University: *Fanaticism, Terror and Hate, as Security Dangers*

11:00 **TERRORISM AND MIDDLE EAST POLITICS**
Chair: David Rosen, ADL
Martin Kramer, Dayan Center: *Terror and Strategy in Islamic Movements*
Barry Rubin, BESA: *Costs and Benefits of State Sponsorship*
Bilge Cihra, Bilkent University: *Terrorism Against Turkey*

14:15 **TERRORISM VERSUS THE PEACE PROCESS**
Chair: Ian Grewson, Bar-Ilan University
Khalil Shikhalil, Palestine Center for Research Studies: *The Peace Process and Political Violence*
Ariel Merari, Tel Aviv University: *The Impact of Political Violence on the Peace Process*
Shmuel Sandler, BESA: *Jewish Religious Extremism and the Peace Process*

16:00 **INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF MIDDLE EAST TERRORISM**
Chair: Anil Kumar Nechmani, BESA
Anat Kurz, Jaffa Center: *Middle East Terrorism in Europe*
Steven Emerson, Middle East Forum: *Middle East Terrorism and America*
Gil Keller, BESA: *Counter-Terrorism Versus Commercial Interests: Do They Conflict?*

Tuesday, May 27, 1997
09:15 **MEDIA AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE**
Chair: Moshe Zak
Ron Schelller, Bar-Ilan University: *The Terrorism Theater: Psychological Warfare*
Ron Ben-Yishai, Yeshiva Aharonot: *The Media and Terrorism*
Edwin Bronner, Boston Globe: *A Foreign Correspondent in the Middle East: The Challenge of Covering Political Violence in Israel and Its Neighbors*

11:00 **THINKING ABOUT THE UNTHINKABLE: WORST CASE SCENARIOS**
Chair: Yonah Alexander, George Washington University
Ian Lesser, RAND: *The Geopolitics of Unconventional Terror*
Deany Shoham and Gerald Steinberg, BESA: *Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Terrorism in the Middle East*
Boaz Ganor, International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism: *Subtle Bombers as a Facet of Terror Strategy*

14:15 **COUNTER-TERRORISM**
Chair: Shmuel Sandler, BESA
Peter Hirsch, Office for the Protection of the Constitution, FRG: *European Counter-Terrorism Policy*
Mei, Gen. (res.) Uri Saguy: *Israeli Counter-Terror Policy*
Irwin Cotler, McGill University: *Anti-Terrorism Law and Policy: The Dilemma of Democracies*

This conference was supported in part by a grant from the U.S. Information Service at the American Embassy in Israel

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Sponsored by the University of Notre Dame, USA
May 25-28, 1997

Status of the Church Unity Movement

Sunday, May 25
19:45 *The Traditions that Divide, the Tradition that Unites*
Prof. Jaroslav Pelikan (History, Yale University)

Monday, May 26
10:30 *The Churches in the Middle East*
Fr. Frans Bouwen (Editor, Proche Orient Chretien; president, Ecumenical Circle of Friends in Jerusalem)

15:45 *Education and Formation in Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations*
Cardinal Edward Cassidy (President, Pontifical Council for Christian Unity)

19:45 *The Present Status of the Ecumenical Movement*
Prof. Arne-Marie Aagaard (Univ. of Aarhus, Denmark; President, World Council of Churches)

Tuesday, May 27
09:00 *The Churches in the Holy Land*
Fr. Frans Bouwen and other local presenters

14:15 *Hermeneutical Approaches to the Jewish-Christian Relationship*
Prof. Michael Signer (Jewish Thought and Culture, Univ. of Notre Dame)

16:00 *The Unity We Seek: An Orthodox Perspective*
Prof. Thomas Hopko (St. Vladimir Orthodox Seminary, New York)

19:45 *Une ecclésiologie œcuménique vers la Communion*
Prof. Jean-M. Tillard, O.P. (Faculty of Theology, Ottawa; Vice-president, WCC Faith and Order Commission)
Simultaneous English translation

Wednesday, May 28
18:00 *Power and Authority in Ecumenical Theology*
Bishop Stephen Sykes (Church of England, Ely)

All sessions are open to the public, without charge. On Monday and Tuesday, luncheons (12:30) and/or dinners (18:30) provided, with charge. Also kosher tables. For more information, Tantor Office, PO BOX 19556, Jerusalem. Tel. 02-676-0911, Fax: 02-676-0914.

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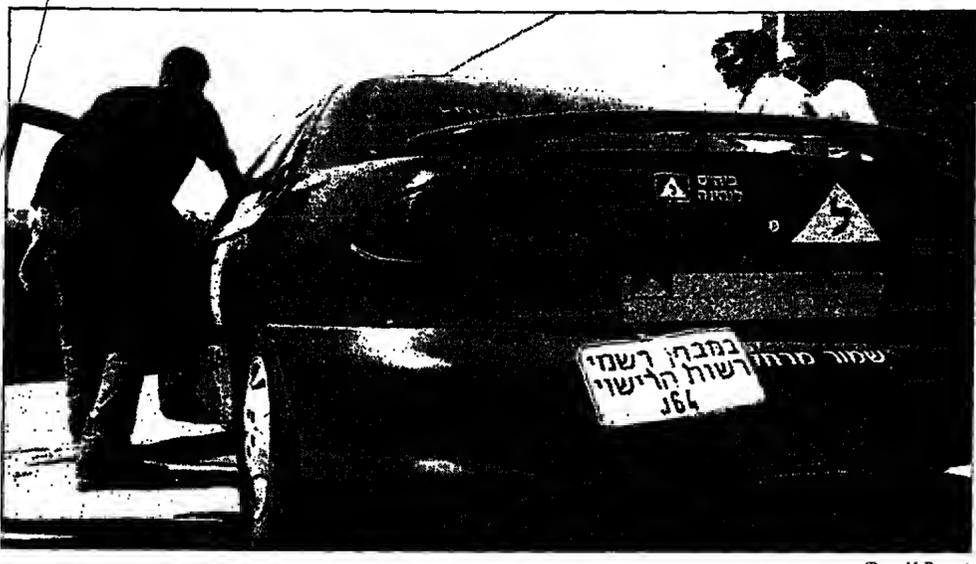
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License to kill?

Driving schools are big business. Are they putting killers behind the wheel in order to make a buck? Aryeh Dean Cohen investigates

When Jay Shames sent his son Elon to learn how to drive just over a year ago, he thought his son would learn the rules of the road. Instead, the two just got taken for a ride. "None of his lessons included a ride on the highway, and none included night driving," Shames said this week, following reports of widespread corruption in driving schools and among Transport Ministry testers.

"I could see his lack of confidence and maturity behind the wheel. As a result, my wife and I decided he'd be forbidden to drive without first driving 1,000 kilometers with one of us in the car," Shames said. His overall opinion of the driving schools: "It's a rip-off, in no uncertain terms. It's completely understandable why there are so many accidents involving young drivers on the open roads."



(Bryan McBarney)

"One of the major recommendations of the government's interministerial committee on road accidents is to tremendously increase resources for pre-license driver training. Based on what we're seeing in Haifa, they're basically pouring good money into a system which may be corrupt, but we're not even sure that if it wasn't, it would achieve its stated purpose."

"The teachers don't teach how to drive and survive, just how to pass the test."

—Anonymous driving instructor

"Students want to pass the test as quickly as possible. If one driving instructor is not able to meet their needs, they simply go elsewhere."

More than being just a rip-off, many say that the situation in the nation's driving schools may be downright dangerous. With little or no supervision, it's hard to see how it's going to get better. And with cutthroat competition, the field is wide open to the type of corruption which saw 13 driving examiners remanded earlier this week to Haifa in an alleged "license for money" scheme. The deadly combination of corruption and poor driver's education may also be one of the reasons Israel is the only Western country with a rise in the road-death toll over the last five years.

One thing is certain: driving schools are big business, with between 3,500 and 4,000 driving instructors currently working in the country. The Transport Ministry requires each potential driver to take at least 28 lessons at an average of about NIS 85 a pop, making the driving schools cash cows. But Yossi Ziv, a master's student in public administration at Tel Aviv University, says competition makes for poorer, not better, instruction.

The driving instructors are caught between a rock and a hard place, says Ziv, who with Galit Yisraeli did a research study of driving schools and testers last year while at Bar-Ilan University. "The Transport Ministry gives them rules they supposedly have to adhere to, but students come to them and say they want to pass the test as quickly as possible. If he's not able to meet their needs, they simply go elsewhere. That situation has given rise to what's known as 'kablanut' — a short cut that makes potential drivers happier, teachers richer, and the nation's highways more dangerous."

Itai and Rahamim, two veteran Jerusalem driving-school instructors — who did not want their real names used — explained how it works. "What happens," Itai explained, "is that the student pays a fixed sum, with the deal being that the teacher will see to it he passes the test! The two decide how many lessons the student will actually take before he takes his driving test. The driving instructor signs that the student has been given the required number of lessons, even if he hasn't, and the student counter-signs. The student saves time, the driver makes more money and can take on more students. In the Haifa case, testers were allegedly bribed by the teachers to make sure such students passed their tests."

Ideally, the manager of the driving school is supposed to check whether the student has been properly prepared before the student even applies for a test. In reality, that doesn't always happen. "The manager signs blind, even though the person can't drive, and we can see this is true by the results of the test. Only 25 percent pass the first time. It's not the testers — the pupils just aren't properly prepared," says Itai. The lessons themselves are rarely supervised, says Ziv. Indeed, Itai, who's been in the field for 35 years, says: "I've been inspected perhaps three times, and only twice in the past decade."

In the recent State Comptroller's Report, the lack of such supervision was severely criticized. "They just have too few people to do the checking," says Ziv. The result is that "the teachers don't teach how to drive and survive,

The rules of the road

The road to a driver's license in Israel is paved with obstacles, most of them human-made and financial. First, there are the lessons. Count on at least 28 of them, the minimum established by the Transport Ministry before a potential driver can take a test to get a license. Most potential drivers take more, between 40 and 45, according to the mother of one high school senior who recently got her wheels. A clerk answering the phone at a downtown Jerusalem driving school said the average person needed between 35 and 40 lessons.

According to a Transport Ministry spokesman, there is no supervision of the price of such lessons. A random phone check of prices put the cost at between NIS 80 and NIS 90, meaning the average wannabe driver can expect to spend about somewhere around NIS 3,000 before he has his first license encounter with a vehicle.

Who can teach you how to drive? Not just anybody, at least not formally. There are no "parent's permits" here, so Dad or your significant other can't help you much until after you get your license. Driving teachers themselves have to take a battery of tests to work in the field; his supervision is lax. Make sure your instructor takes you out in all kinds of weather and demand practicing highway driving.

Drivers must pass a theory test, 30 questions, pepped out of a bank of 2,300 by Transport Ministry computers, to prevent cheating. About a dozen study books are on the market to prepare for the theory tests.

High school driver's education exists here, according to Zvi Shabbat, Director of Road and Environmental Safety at the Education Ministry, but the schools "don't touch" the practical aspects of driving, but in 2,100 of 2,800 11th graders in the country, a 26-hour class is given in "Traffic Education." It prepares them mentally for the responsibility of driving.

road test. If they pass all these, they then spend a month sitting in the back while veteran testers test drivers. They are then evaluated by the testers' supervisor before being allowed to test drivers on their own. Testers, he explained, are on personal contracts, meaning that even veteran testers who started before the new requirement was introduced will have to stop working after a maximum of seven years. To continue, they will have to take the aforementioned course. "Show me any other country in the world which has such stiff requirements," he said. "There is no connection between the current incidents and the level of training the testers undergo."

Ziv points out it's unfair to tar all the testers or teachers with one brush. "There is a move towards trying to improve the situation," he says. The Transport Ministry's Yoel Epstein, national supervisor of driving schools, cautions that despite the Haifa findings, "we shouldn't draw conclusions and say they are all thieves."

However, he admits that the inspections of the schools are not done "in depth," and "we need to step up inspection." Ziv suggests that an external body be given that job, and both Epstein and Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy spoke this week about possible privatization of the testing process. Ziv says the driving tests should also be longer, and testers and teachers should be required to undergo periodic refresher classes. He also suggests building more special drivers' hazard courses like the one in Ashdod, where drivers can learn to avoid potential road dangers.

Regardless of their quality, there are some who doubt the value of driving classes altogether. Dr. Eilihu Richter, head of the Betts Injury Prevention Program at the Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Public Health and Community Medicine, isn't sure they're effective. Noting that Israeli drivers may soon be re-tested every five years, Richter says this may be completely ineffective in reducing the carnage on the roads.

"A few of us in my program have for years been demanding a re-examination of the effectiveness of pre-license driver training programs, the reason being that whenever they've been looked at in the past, they've not been shown to have any value in preventing road injuries and road deaths," says Richter. "I've already spoken to the min-

ister to ask that we check to see whether the risk for crashes with injury and death was higher among those who didn't go through the courses as they're supposed to, compared to those who did. We'd like to believe there's a difference, but this has to be checked.

"There's this whole driving teachers' lobby," he says, "and basically they have a captive market for the possibility of corruption." He calls the Haifa licensing ring scam "sleaze, but it's not surprising."

"We're proposing to compare people who went the required route without bribes to those who supposedly cheated, and see whether there was a difference in the number of injuries and deaths in the collisions they were involved in," says Richter. "No one's been able to demonstrate any benefit from these courses in reducing risk among teenagers who take them," he says. "I'd like to believe that we are the exception. This is the opportunity to find out. If the transport minister is smart, he'll move right away on this."

Better investigation of crashes involving drivers just out of the schools would also help, says Zeldi Harris, spokesperson for Metuna, the national voluntary organization fighting road carnage. "The driving examiner and the driving school should be approached, because there has to be a reason why the person was so incompetent on the road just after passing a test," she says, noting that international research studies show that most driving school graduates are not involved in car crashes until at least a year or two after completing the course.

"Nobody looks into the background of the driver... no one ever says 'Who passed this driver? Who gave this person a license and decided they are roadworthy? It's like when you test a car — unless the car is absolutely perfect it doesn't go out on the road. So how can these people in all honesty put a driver on the road who has not fulfilled his commitment, or has been passed because he paid rather than proved he could drive?'"

You don't have to go to driving school to learn the answer to that question. As Harris says of the scam: "Some people seem to value money over human life."

In accordance with the 1961 Traffic Laws, traffic arrangements have been set for the Sabbath and Jewish holidays on the Yirmiyahu - Bar-Ilan Route

Yirmiyahu and Bar-Ilan streets will be closed to all traffic, excluding emergency vehicles, in both directions, on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, between the Brandeis and Shmuel Hanavi Intersections during the following hours:

1. For an hour and forty-five minutes from the start of the Sabbath or Holiday.
2. On Saturdays and holidays, from 7:30am until 11:30am, and the last hour and forty-five minutes before the end of the Sabbath or holiday.

Traffic will flow freely at all other times.

No changes will take place in the traffic arrangements on Golda Meir St., Shmuel Hanavi St., Sha'arei Yerushalayim St. (Route 4), Yigal Ya'acov St. (Route 9), and Derech Hashalom St. (Route 1). These streets will remain open to traffic.

Various traffic signs will be posted along the route, operating automatically on a set schedule to control traffic.

In order to ensure the free passage of security vehicles, barricades will not be set up on the road.

Drivers are asked to obey the instructions on the traffic signs.

Exemptions from the traffic order, which will grant entrance to Yirmiyahu street from the corner of Brandeis to 70 meters from the corner of Zefanya, will be given to residents of the surrounding neighborhoods and their guests. The included neighborhoods are: Tel Arza, Ha-Bukharim, Azertel Torah, Kerem Avraham, Mahanayim, Chabad Complexes.

Requests for this exemption can be made through the Ministry of Transportation, to Mrs. Etty Gil, Tel. 02-6228662 between 10:00 - 12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00 (except on Mondays); or by mail at: P.O. Box 867, Jerusalem 91008.

The requests must include full details, identity number, address, and car number (which must be owned by the requester).

Information & Public Relations Department

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David & Janet Polak
International Conferencing Center and Auditorium
Sunday, May 25, 1997 at 8:45 a.m.
Coler California Visitors Center
Technion City, Haifa

The Scott Black Executive Program of the Technion Institute of Management (TIM)
Sunday, May 25, 1997 at 7:00 p.m.
Elron Corporation, MATAM Industrial Park, Haifa

The William & Gloria Lester Wing for Optical Information Processing and Information Technologies
Monday, May 26, 1997 at 8:45 a.m.
Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Technion City, Haifa

A man of means

As a part-time journalist, Alex Preskovsky lost out on a solid scoop when he failed to record Gregory Lerner's response at a public meeting in Ashkelon last October when a young Russian immigrant asked him how to make money.

However, as a young man planning to go into business, it may be just as well that Preskovsky doesn't remember Lerner's answer.

Lerner, also known as Zvi Ben-Ari, was remanded last week on suspicion of having stolen \$85 million from a Russian bank and involvement in the murder of a banker.

As seen by fellow Ashkelon residents, Lerner was a decent chap eager to do good works. He did not hunker down in his villa with its army of round-the-clock guards, but lavished his money around town in an evident desire not only to be respected but to be liked. They would be disappointed, say fellow Russian immigrants, if it turns out that he wanted respect so much he would kill for it. But they reject the unspoken "aha" their well-tuned ears hear being directed at them by those Israelis who see in Lerner's arrest confirmation of the widespread

To residents of Ashkelon, Gregory Lerner was a decent chap. His arrest has strengthened the stigma linking Russian immigrants with the mafia, Abraham Rabinovich reports

equation of Russian immigrants with shady dealings.

"There is jealousy in Israel of Russian immigrants," says 26-year-old Preskovsky, who edits a local Russian-language bi-monthly newspaper, *Nasha Gazeta*, in addition to studying economics in Tel Aviv.

"They see Russians succeeding in politics and business. I can understand how someone born here would think."

Lerner is the first alleged mafia "big fish" arrested in Israel after years of warnings by police that Russian criminals were laundering billions of dirty dollars in Israel, flying in for summit meetings in Eilat and Tel Aviv, and attempting to buy their way into the Israeli eco-

nomie and political establishment.

Police Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz, after meeting security officials in Russia and Ukraine two years ago, warned upon his return that the Russian mafia was continuing to channel huge sums of black capital to Israel. "They are attempting to exploit their resources in order to back candidates in the coming [Israeli] elections and gain a position of power."

With that background, Natan Sharansky must have shuddered at the headline in *Yedioth Aharonot* last week quoting Lerner as saying "I gave Sharansky \$100,000."

Sharansky confirmed that he had indeed received \$100,000 from Lerner. It occurred, however, in

1994, before the creation of his Yisrael Ba'aliya party, and the money, he said through a spokesman, went to an association teaching new immigrants the rights and obligations of citizens in a democracy.

Lerner "was known as a successful businessman who contributed to immigrant absorption" and other good causes, said the spokesman. The *Yedioth* story reported Lerner as becoming angry at Sharansky when the latter refused to help him get a permit to establish a bank in Israel.

Lerner reportedly began his business career modestly in the 1970s while studying journalism at Moscow University by peddling black-market razor blades and the like. According to Russian newspapers, he graduated swiftly to large-scale fraud of which he was convicted in 1982. He put in a year of hard labor in a prison camp and another year of punishment as a worker in a chemical factory.

Having paid his debt to Soviet society, he was soon trying to figure how Soviet society could pay its debt to him.

As the Communist regime gave way to near-anarchy, he was

among those free spirits who proved able to ride the dangerous currents of the new order. When he hurriedly left the country in 1990 with his wife and 15-year-old daughter, a police investigation into a \$20 million larceny case was yapping at his heels.

THE FAMILY settled in Ashkelon with, Lerner insists, just \$15 in his pockets. He would soon need suitcases, according to the published testimony of a bodyguard, to move around the large amounts of cash coming his way. Lerner had wasted no time getting into the investment field in Israel.

Traveling to Zurich on business in 1992, he was arrested at the request of Interpol and flown to Russia to stand trial. Reportedly jumping bail, he made his way back to Israel.

Lerner took elaborate precautions for the safety of himself and his family.

His black Mercedes would be coooyed by cars filled with guards when he commuted between Ashkelon and his office on the Tel Aviv shorefront.



Lerner insists he settled in Ashkelon with just \$15 in his pockets. He would soon need suitcases to move around the large amounts of cash coming his way.

See MAFIA, Page 18

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA SILVER BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

On May 25th, the International Board of Governors of the University of Haifa will convene for the 25th time since the University's establishment as an accredited, degree-granting research institution in 1972. The silver lining undergirding the University's growth and development over these years is its commitment to excellence alongside a responsibility to community. The two qualities - excellence and responsibility - start at the top, in the year-round active role played by the Chairman of the Board, Sir Anthony Jacobs.



Sir Anthony Jacobs
Chairman of the Board
of Governors



Mr. Gil Weiser
Chairman of the
Executive Committee



Prof. Yehuda Hayuth
President



Prof. Mordechai
Shechter
Rector

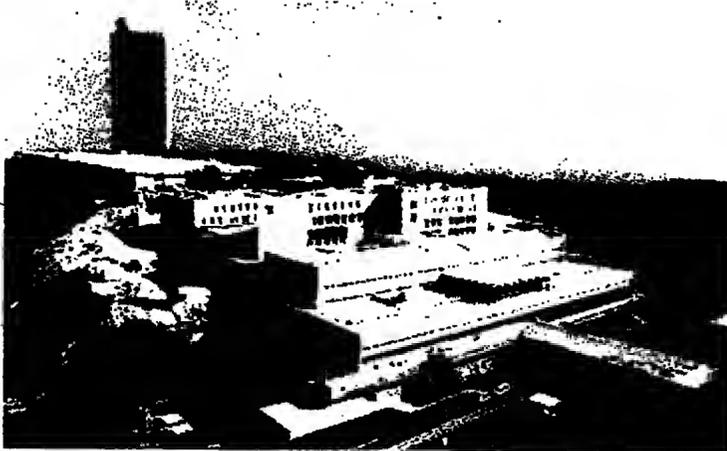


Ms. Yael Meiser
Vice President, Public
Relations & Resource
Development



Prof. Aharon Kellerman
Vice President for
Administration

- * They are reflected in the decision to award students accepted to the elite B.A. Honors Program a full-tuition scholarship.
- * They are mirrored in the dedication of the newly constructed Yitzhak Rabin Complex for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Mathematics to take place in the presence of the Rabin family.
- * They are manifested in increased applications and enrollment in specialized, often interdisciplinary Master's degree and rigorous Ph.D. programs.
- * They resonate in the Social Involvement Unit, whose concern is that previously neglected populations of Haifa and northern Israel and new immigrants to these shores receive the benefits of a superior higher education.



There are more than 12,500 students now pursuing a degree at the University of Haifa high atop Mount Carmel as this auspicious anniversary is being celebrated.

Honors

Life achievements in the arts, sciences, education, business, and philanthropy will be cited during the Board of Governors Meeting.

Guest of Honor at Honorary Doctorate Ceremony: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

Honorary Doctorates



Prof. He'lene Ahreweier
France, historian



M. P. Dr. Gro Harlem
Brundtland
Norway, public service



Mr. Dani Karavan
Israel, sculptor



Mr. Hans Koschnick
Germany, public service



Justice Shoshana Netanyahu
Israel, jurist



Prof. Yosef Hayim
Yerushalmi
U.S.A., historian

Humanitarian Award of Merit



Dr. Marcin Indyk
U.S. Ambassador to Israel



Ms. Gila Almogor
Israel, actress



Mr. Yaacov Agnon
Israel, theatrical producer

Honorary Fellow



Dr. Alberto M. Spolski
Argentina, banker and
community leader

University Award of Merit



Prof. Akiba Gilboa
Israel, historian

Events

Dedications

- * Yitzhak Rabin Complex for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Mathematics
Guests of honor at this event: formally marking the University's largest edifice: M.K. Ehud Barak, Ms. Talia Rabin-Pelossof, and Mr. Yuval Rabin
- * Herta and Paul Amir Social Sciences Building
- * Sculptures:
"Colon and the Jewish Contribution to the Discovery Voyages" and "East of Colon" by Frank Meisler, commissioned and donated by the Samson Trust, Channel Islands, of the Elie Schalit family, Caesarea



- * Brazilian Friends Geography Department Wing
- * Sarah Kocinski Sociology and Anthropology Department Wing
- * New Dormitories (gift of Friends Associations of Britain, Canada, South America, and Israel)
- * Gerd Bucarius Laboratory for Research and Training in Learning Disabilities
- * Also: The Mexico Auditorium, Jean and Nico Matarasso Auditorium, Ribstein Auditorium, Horence S. Firth Foyer, French Friends Registration Information Center, Rautenberg Classroom, Weilheimer Classroom

Cornerstone Laying Gad and Talia Ze'evi Dormitories

Planting Ceremony The Israeli Friends of Haifa University Wood

Academic Discussions
In addition to deciding on resolutions regarding the future development of the University, the Governors will deliberate two general topics of current interest: "The Academic World and Telecommunications Toward the Year 2000"; "Jewish and Israeli Intellectuals and Political Agenda Setting: The Role of the Skeptic in a Believing Society."

Academic Awards
Annual awards will be presented to young scholars and students for their promise/achievement in certain fields:
* Dusty and Etie Miller Fellowship for Outstanding Young Scholars
* Maurice Hatter Fellowships in Maritime Studies
* Mathilde and Ernst Fraenkel Fellowships for the Research of Haifa and the Galilee

הכלה מן האצל

MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

Beyond Deep Blue

of the earth. Or think of the railroad. In the 19th century it enabled millions of destitute East European farm laborers to find seasonal work in Germany and France...

When a small airplane crashed into the 76th floor of Manhattan's Empire State Building in 1945 some saw in that tragedy a sign that, much like the biblical Tower of Babel, modern man's rooks were not only scraping the sky, but also tickling God Himself.

Has Deep Blue - the computer which ostensibly beat a human brain in a match that took place walking distance from that very tower - just sent us a similar message?

Considering recent history's orgies of bloodshed, even technology's most impressive accomplishments cannot hide its problematic relationship with morality, mortality, and rapacity.

Take for instance the most important industrial invention of this century, which scholars agree - to most people's surprise - is neither the car, nor the airplane nor even the computer, but Henry Ford's conveyor belt.

That enigmatic industrialist's flash of genius, namely the system which allowed the mass manufacture of identical products and the creation of millions of jobs, within a few decades led the planners of the Holocaust to seek a similar mechanism that would instantaneously sweep masses of people off the face

wheel could travel farther and faster than any pair of legs, wasn't that the whole point of it? Just how fast and far that would be was trivial. In other words, what if we now learned that a computer plays chess better than all of us...

THE RIDDLE, therefore, is not about the relationship between the abilities of man and his inventions, but about the direction in which mankind leads its creations. In other words, judging by precedent the sad question is how long will it take before computers - like trains, conveyor belts and airplanes before them - are mobilized in order to perpetrate yet another mass atrocity.

The signs, to be sure, are already beginning to surface on the wall, whether in the form of organized crime breaking into people's financial assets, drug pushers peddling their poison to children through e-mail, or a sect of Internet freaks taking their own lives in a posh San Diego mansion.

But shunning inventions is no option, since man's inherent curiosity is predestined to generate innovations, and those will in turn end up in the hands of criminals, dictators and drifters.

In fact, even powerful empires which thought they could ignore the advance of technology were ultimately overpowered by its march.

For instance, an arrogant Ottoman leadership's initial rejection of the printing press - which Muslim clerics found to be profane -

played a major role in creating the technological gap which until today lies between the First and Third Worlds. That conceit resulted in Moslems watching helplessly with a mixture of admiration and anger as knowledge and curiosity spread across Europe like wildfire while Christians invented everything and anything from the steamboat and the light bulb to submarines and supersonic jets, until they finally planted an infidels' flag on the crescent itself.

Today, though many bad guys are already hard at work abusing high-tech, when it comes to governments the good guys are still in reasonable shape.

Yes, in all likelihood the assorted intelligence services, police departments and interior ministries of even the most civilized democracies are busy poking their noses into various aspects of our lives in ways that may verge on the illegal, and be well past the immoral.

But at least we know that the real Dr. Strangelove can hardly sprout and flourish in places like North Korea, Cuba or Iran, where they might truly become lethal, since those countries - like the medieval Ottomans - shun freedom of expression and invention.

But who can promise us that the symbiosis between despotism and high-tech is not lurking around the corner? Can Deep Blue be God's hint that man's computerized rooks are tickling Him like some suggested Manhattan's towers once did? Just in case it is, we must perfect our mastery of these inventions, so that when their day comes we can confront those who will be there to abuse them.

Dry Bones



SHABBAT SHALOM



Penaha Behan

By SHLOMO RISKIN

"And you shall hallow the 50th year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee to you, and you shall return every man to his possession, and you shall return every man to his family." (Lev. 25: 10)

Does our Torah teach a religion which is God-centered or human-being centered? This week's portion of Behar refers to an event which occurred only twice in a century, when the blast of the shofar proclaimed freedom from social and economic bondage.

As a concept, Jubilee is earth-shaking, its power derived from the fact that it's an all-consuming event that lasted a full year and you turned the Jewish world right side up after what may have been for many individuals 49 years of inequity, humiliation and pain.

It must also be remembered that the Jubilee year did not occur in a vacuum. Each week culminates in the Sabbath day, a 25-hour period dedicated to spiritual refreshment and reverence for life, wherein we are commanded that "your gentle manservant and maidservant must rest like you." (Deut. 5:14)

The overall figures were: No connection: 70.6%; connection: 14.6%. Gallup conducted the poll for IMRA/Independent Media Review & Analysis.

Born out of a desire to redress economic exploitation and personal misfortunes, Jubilee freed all slaves, gave everyone a chance for a new economic start, and proclaimed the Jewish right of return.

Jubilee also contains a historic and, if you will, even messianic message. It teaches that eventually every individual will be freed from persecution, exile and foreign domination; eventually the children will return to the land of their ancestors.

The Sabbath day, the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee epoch also serve to illuminate a central concern of Torah Judaism: Observance of Jewish law and our return to our ancestral homeland must take place within a context of human freedom and equal opportunity.

All too often, unfortunately, the indelible bond between ritual and righteousness, ethnic connection and ethical sensitivity seems to be missing from our religious consciousness. Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the great Lithuanian Jewish religious leader of the 19th century, established the Mussar Movement in an attempt to restore the fundamental identity of religio-legalism with humanistic concerns.

An excellent illustration is the following story: One Rosh Hashana night, as Rabbi Yisrael sat unrecognized in a strange synagogue, his attention was drawn toward a Jew who was translating his prayers into German, every muscle of his body concentrating

On the Days of Awe, when each of us must plumb the depths of his or her conscience to ascertain if we are accomplishing all that we can, the prayer book helps in our meditation: "O God, before I was born, I was worthless" - because I could not have possibly begun to fulfill my life's mission. "And now that I have been born, it's as though I had not been born" - because I am not fulfilling myself in accord with my potential!

The Jubilee year has not yet been reestablished. But are we sufficiently expressing the Torah's concern for the cessation of human exploitation, for opportunity for all, for the abolition of unfair indebtedness and exorbitant interest rates?

I would suggest that only when religious Judaism expresses the social concerns of our tradition do we have a chance of sounding the shofar of Jubilee and Redemption.

Days of freedom

on the words, "Elokai - ad shelo nozarti, cini kedai," the man's voice trembled, "Oh, God, before I was born I was worthless, and now that I'm born it's as if I had never been born..."

It sent a chill through the rabbi's heart. "Afar ani behayai ... I am dust in my life ... a vessel filled with shame and embarrassment."

It didn't take too long before someone recognized the renowned rabbi. The sexton asked him to honor the congregation by sitting next to the Holy Ark. But Rabbi Yisrael refused. He was much more interested in sitting close to the worshiper who translated every word with such profound emotion.

On Yom Kippur, however, when this seemingly humble Jew was given the honor of tying the Torah scroll (gelila), he began to tremble with rage: "How dare you!" he seethed at the sexton. "Don't you realize what I am? Haven't you seen how I sat here all Rosh Hashana, praying with every ounce of strength my soul could bear? Is this the only honor you can afford me?!"

No one in the thunderstruck congregation was more shocked than Rabbi Yisrael Salanter. At the first opportunity he turned to the man and asked him how he reconciled passionate prayer with passionate pride.

"Pride!" he sneered, nearly choking on his anger. "What pride? Every tear I weep is genuine. I feel it in the depth of my bones. Compare me to God and I'm nothing, a vessel filled with the shame of sin, a foul creature. But compared to these shoemakers, to that gabbai?! I certainly deserve to be honored to a greater extent than gelila!"

Every individual, taught Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hakohen Kook, first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, has a unique opportunity to serve the Almighty. The way in which he or she does so, however, depends on the individual's gifts of character, intellect and emotion as well as the needs of the generation.

On the Days of Awe, when each of us must plumb the depths of his or her conscience to ascertain if we are accomplishing all that we can, the prayer book helps in our meditation: "O God, before I was born, I was worthless" - because I could not have possibly begun to fulfill my life's mission. "And now that I have been born, it's as though I had not been born" - because I am not fulfilling myself in accord with my potential!

The Jubilee year has not yet been reestablished. But are we sufficiently expressing the Torah's concern for the cessation of human exploitation, for opportunity for all, for the abolition of unfair indebtedness and exorbitant interest rates?

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Shabbat Shalom

A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

Finger-pointers, quakers and hoodlums

Then there is the meaning in which Rabbis Diskin and Sonnenfeld intended it, "to be very anxious about, eager for, deeply concerned with": "Hear the word of God, you who are *haredim* for His word..." (Isaiah 66:2, 5; see also Ezra 10:3 and II Kings 4:13).

The *Ela Haredit* later became identified with the very vocal and bellicose *Netorei Karta*.

In our own day the term *haredit* and everything and everyone connected to it have become identified with the hoodlums who come to Jerusalem's Bar-Ilan Street every Shabbat and festival to throw stones, garbage and feces-filled diapers at the police and passing vehicles, who conduct public displays of spiteful disregard of the Remembrance Day sirens, who, like our Palestinian "peace partners," from time to time burn the national flag or otherwise display their contempt for the rest of us.

These *haredim*, who are a small, terrorist minority of what is referred to as "the Haredi community," ought to note the context in which Isaiah exhorts the *haredim* of his day. His exhortation is preceded by God's message, saying *inter alia*: "...the one I will concern Myself with is him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and is *hared* concerning My word."

THERE IS "one recent and most significant occasion when Am Yisrael (the Jewish people) was one, and that was at the gas chambers." Peter Lahav of Jerusalem sent me

this reminder in commenting on my column of May 9, "The 'one people' fiction."

Lahav is right, of course, and I have no rational explanation for my having omitted the Holocaust from my short list of occasions when the Jews indeed acted, or were treated, as one people. As Lahav notes, at that time the Germans and their collaborators did not distinguish between the religious and the non-religious, rightists and leftists, or, for that matter, between Jews and atheists or practicing Christians of Jewish parentage.

But Lahav uses my omission as another occasion for his chronic finger-pointing at religious Jews. We were one people "at the gas chambers," he writes, because "there were no rabbis or *haredim* politicians there ... with their divisive ideology."

He is so carried away by his antipathy to them that he distorts history. I wrote about Theodor Herzl's impassioned declaration, "We are a people, one people." And I wrote how Herzl "brought the Jews of the world institutionally together ... under the Zionist roof, which quickly became a hotbed for the resurrection of our people-wide factionalism and fractiousness."

Ignoring historical fact, Lahav blames this, too, on "the anti-Zionist Orthodox and *haredim*" whom, he writes, the Zionist movement gave "a chance to spread their narrow world outlook under its roof..." This is the first I hear that those particular circles came under the Zionist roof, either at their own initiative or at the invitation of the Zionist establishment.

Secondly, Lahav ignores the support Herzl received from such *pro-Zionist* Orthodox and *haredim* as Rabbis Yehuda Alcaiz, Meir Berlin

(Bar-Ilan), Yehuda Leib Hakohen Fishman (Maimon), Eliahu Guttmacher, and Zvi Hirsch Kahlscher, A.Y.H. Kook, Shmuel Mohilever, Yitzhak Ya'acov Reines, Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel and their followers. Some of them even preceded Herzl with programs for Jewish national restoration in Eretz Yisrael, and some were founders of the Mizrahi religious-Zionist movement.

Last but not least, the Zionist movement was well factionalized before Mizrahi came on the scene. Lahav exhorts me and my ilk: "You, too, should engage in *hesbon nefesh* (spiritual stocktaking) before preaching to others."

If he will reread that column carefully, and also my column of April 25 on the triumphalist trumpeting in both our religious and our secularist camps, he will see that I heartily recommend *hesbon nefesh* for all of us.

All of us should also bear in mind that ancient (I think Chinese) admonition that when you point an accusing finger at your fellow, you are pointing three fingers at yourself.

OUR MEDIACRATS devote a great deal of time and, in the print media, prominent space to the shenanigans of those hoodlums, and to those so-called *haredim* who resist any form of national service, especially the young men who aren't *bona fide* yeshiva students. They devote very little space to the efforts of other *haredim* communal leaders and spokesmen to stop the hoodlumism; they devoted very little space to the meeting of a group of them with President Ezer Weizman last week, to apologize, through him, to the nation for the behavior of those hoodlums on

Remembrance Day and Independence Day.

In general, our mediocrats generally ignore the day-to-day life of the country's *haredi* Jews, thus missing out on many fascinating stories involving the galaxies of educational, social and eleemosynary activities initiated and maintained by our Orthodox Jews for themselves and for the general community.

THERE IS a general stereotypical impression, fostered by Shas demagogues and many mediocrats of all camps, that Sephardim overwhelmingly consider MK Aryeh Deri a victim of racial discrimination at the hands of the state prosecution. The truth is overwhelmingly the opposite, according to a Gallup poll.

In a telephone survey, Gallup asked 500 Israeli Jews whether they thought there is a connection between Deri's being a Sephardi and his being the only one mentioned for possible indictment in the Bar-On affair.

Nearly two thirds of those identified as Sephardi, 64.8%, saw no connection, as compared to 18.9% who did see one. The rest either wouldn't answer didn't know.

The pollsters classed as "Sephardi" those who said they were born in a Middle Eastern country or whose father was born in one.

Of the non-Sephardi interviewees, 74.9% saw no connection and 11.7% did see one.

Of those who defined themselves as secular, the respective figures were 81.8% vs. 7.9% among the religious, 61.6% vs. 20.4%.

THE JEWS OF PIEDMONT & LOMBARDY



From the 14th century onwards, Jews escaping persecution settled in Piedmont, which was part of the Duchy of Savoy, and there is evidence from the 12th century of Jews living in Lombardy, part of the Duchy of Milan.

The English speaking tour, organized by JEWISH HISTORICAL SEMINARS and ZIONTOURS, takes place from Monday, JUNE 16, until Thursday, JUNE 26.

Led by Prof. Yom Tov Asels of the Dept. of the History of the Jewish People, of the Hebrew University, an 11 day tour will visit Carmagnola, Gherasco, Biella, VerCELLI, Casale Monferrate, Saluzzo, Cuneo Mondovi, and the numerous Jewish quarters of Turin and Milan.

The price of US\$2495 includes return flight by scheduled airline, double-room accommodation in first-class hotels, full daily buffet breakfast, kosher Shabbat dinner and lunch, nine lectures, excellent local guide, all entrance fees, touring in luxury buses, transfers, etc.

Every day there will be a lecture on a different aspect of the study trip and we will visit synagogues, Valentino Castle, the Roman Fortress, the Royal Palace, the Antiquity Museum in Turin, as well as the Hebrew Manuscript collection at the National Library. In Milan, we'll visit the Brera Picture Gallery, Sforza Castle, and the Ambrosian Library.

Land arrangements only: US\$1945. Further information and complete itinerary: Debbie Zuberi, Tel. 02-534-5191, Jo-Anne Greenblatt, Tel. 02-534-2079. e-mail: zuberi@netvision.net.il ZIONTOURS, Fax. 02-525-5329 Please register early, as our last trips were booked up quickly.

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The peace process's new savior

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

It was quiet on the peace front this week. Ominously so. In fact, a touch of déjà vu was in the air as US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made what sounded like a resonant paraphrase of former US envoy James Baker's famous "there is my phone number, call me when you're ready." The Oxford Dictionary may define déjà vu as "something tediously familiar," but it was almost possible to hear a relieved "phew!" coming from government bunkers. At last that Bill Clinton fellow is off our backs. Now we can wallow in the tediously familiar "the world is all against us" and do whatever we like.

Well, it may not be quite like the good old Shamir era. After Dennis Ross, Ezer Weizman and the European Union's Miguel Moratinos all failed, a strange new figure bounded center stage to try his hand at the "save the peace process" game.

The figure looked remarkably like the Shas spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef - but surely it could not be he making plans to meet Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat?

It was indeed, and confusing as it may appear, it seems both Palestinians and US Ambassador Martin Indyk have been urging Yosef to meet Arafat.

It may have faded far from most people's memories, but Shas once did support the peace process.

SHUFFLED

With nothing happening on the weed-strewn Oslo ramparts, there



Rabbi Ovadia Yosef: Planning to meet Arafat. (Isaac Harari)

was plenty of time for wrangling and rumblings on the domestic front.

First came the angry resignation of the ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran, only four days after taking office. This was in protest against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hush-hush meeting with King Hussein in Akaba

replace him with his political adviser Dr. Dore Gold. Ben-Elissar told the prime minister he absolutely refused to budge. If there really was a Bibi Plan A, it was well and truly confounded. Roll out Plan B.

After a few more hours of swirling rumors ("Gold will become Ben-Elissar's No. 2 in the Washington embassy") the startling official announcement came. Gold was appointed United Nations ambassador.

This little skirmish passed for the "reshuffle" Netanyahu had promised after the Bar-On Affair to "improve cabinet functioning" by making better appointments. But exactly who will replace whom? Or bow wide will the reshuffle ripple spread? Or is that it? No one knows - not even, it is whispered, the prime minister.



Dore Gold (Ariel Jerozolimski)

Olmert described this problem as "built-in" - Netanyahu promising people appointments, then reneging. Olmert predicted more of the same.

Next dig in the prime-ministerial ribs came from the deputy finance minister, David Magen, a member of David Levy's Geshet faction in the Likud. Magen, a mere bour after quitting, launched an attack on the leader for running a dysfunctional cabinet.

Saying he resigned so he could "open his mouth freely," Magen promised to be even more outspoken after two weeks of "cooling off."

The usually demure Immigration and Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein of Yisrael Ba'aliya, warned that the "bal-agan" (chaos) in the government continues, ministers just will not stay in it.

"The situation is simply awful," he told Ha'aretz. Even the ultimate gentleman of the Likud, Moshe Arens, could not resist slamming Netanyahu and suggesting he has a real problem with appointments - bad appointments - that damage government work.

ELBOWS OUT

This indeed is a sharp-elbows government.

Dr. Yossi Olmert, promised the UN post nine months ago, has learned that the hard way. For almost a year, Olmert and family have been living out of a suitcase, waiting for the signal to hop on a plane to New York.

At the beginning of the week, he at last complained bitterly when he heard someone else was being offered the job.

"The prime minister has a severe credibility problem," said Olmert, a Likud Knesset candidate, but by no means a political rival.

RED TAPE

New immigrants held an angry demonstration this week against Edelstein and Yisrael Ba'aliya's failure to solve their seven-year-old housing problems.

The immigrants are beginning to ask exactly what their party's leaders have done for their fellow immigrants since sweeping up seven mandates on promises to improve conditions for new immigrants.

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky seems somewhat preoccupied with Kasparov, Deep Blue and chess in between escorting oversized entourages to Russia, and staring in BBC documentaries.

In fact, Sharansky and Edelstein did vote in the cabinet for the conversion law, which victimizes their own voters most since more than one third of immigrants from the former Soviet Union - an estimated 200,000 - are labeled as not quite kosher by the rabbinical establishment.

This leaves those who fled Soviet red tape now being trapped in miles of the stuff by harassing rabbis and bumbling bureaucrats in the state labyrinths.

WRONG PARTY

The director-general of the prime minister's office, Avigdor Lieberman, made the statement of the week.

He told Ofakim mayor Micha Herman: "Your problem is, you're not from the right party," when asked why all state budgets for the townships' development have been frozen.

Herman, Labor, complained to Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani who visited Ofakim. Ha'aretz reported this week.

But Lieberman had already made this statement last July. Herman said other ministers had confirmed "there is a new order of priorities."

Herman said that while he is not a member of the ruling party, 75 percent of Ofakim's residents voted for Netanyahu and Likud.

"Don't they deserve anything?" he asked. "A mayor comes and goes, but someone up there must take care of the residents."

DITHER 2000

The authorities planning the massive Expo 2000 in Germany to mark the end of the millennium would love to allocate Israel a prestigious site in the vast arena. But they can't.

The reason is simple - the government hasn't yet signed up as a participant. And time is running out - as in next month, those in the know told us this week.

After that, the site of high-tech Israel's pavilion could be a dusty hole down a dark corridor with some Third World leftovers. Alongside Micronesia perhaps?

This is the first-ever such event in Germany in the history of the World Exposition, which dates back to the Great Exhibition held in London's Crystal Palace in 1851.

This marked the start of the modern era. Expo 2000's theme, Mankind-Nature-Technology, will explore the challenges of the 21st century.

In 1995 Chancellor Helmut Kohl invited 185 nations and nine international organizations to come to Germany and participate.

A year later, Botswana became the 91st state to accept. Hello, Industry and Trade Ministry! Is anyone at home up there?

GRAPEVINE



Getting a taste of Israel: Sara Lee (right) of cake fame samples a local delicacy with a member of a US Jewish delegation. (Jacob Kazis)

Let them eat cake

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

It may not have been politically correct to present Sara Lee Schupf with a generous slice of El Al's Carmel cheesecake. But the elegant businesswoman and philanthropist - whose father, Chicago-based Jewish baker Charles Lubin, who pioneered a baked goods empire and named a cake after her - pronounced the El Al offering "quite good." Sara Lee, who has multi-million-dollar investments in Israel, flew in on the national carrier, as the head of an eight-women delegation representing leading Jewish organizations in the US. The delegation visited the Weizman Institute and met with local captains of industry.

PROUD GRAND-MOTHER and wife of the Knesset speaker, Ludmilla Tichon is tickled pink with her two-year-old granddaughter Sharon. When the youngster's parents thought it was time for toilet training, they bought her a potty, explaining that if she learned to behave like a grown-up she could get rid of her diapers. Sharon, thought for a minute then scrambled like a dervish out of the room.

Her bewildered parents wondered what they'd done wrong, but realized moments later that Sharon was taking the whole affair very seriously. She returned to the room carrying a newspaper. If she was going to learn how to behave like an adult, then she was going to do it properly.

A POIGNANT, unplanned and totally unexpected reunion took place last Friday night at the festive Kabbalat, Shabbat dinner hosted at the Tel Aviv Hilton by Sir Leslie and Dame Shirley Porter for guests attending the Tel Aviv University Board of Governors meeting. Arnold Warski from Melbourne spied a familiar face which was still recognizable even though the two had not seen each other in over half a century. "David!" he cried out in delighted disbelief. David Scharf from Frankfurt and Warski had both been imprisoned in the Dorot concentration camp near Katowice where 70,000 Jews were killed. As far as they are aware, they are the only two survivors, and ironically, the numbers on their arms are consecutive.

FOREIGN DIPLOMATS are flying in from all over for events at institutions of higher learning. Anatoly Dobrynin, who for many years was Soviet ambassador to the United States and later political adviser to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, will be one of the speakers at the international conference on Six Days - Thirty Years, opening next Monday at Tel Aviv University's Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies.

Former US ambassador to the United Nations, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who is known to be a great supporter of Israel, will next Tuesday be awarded an honorary Ph.D. by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev at the 27th meeting of the University's Board of Governors.

THINGS ARE less rosy for Roseanne Barr. After the marital breakups in her personal life, she has now come to the end of the road with her small-screen husband John Goodman.

It's not that the two have had a falling-out. It's simply that after nine years on the air, the popular show is winding up and this week they went into rehearsal for the final episode. That doesn't necessarily mean that we've seen the end of Roseanne herself. She's reportedly negotiating for a talk show.



Roseanne Barr

One of four recipients, Moynihan has been selected for an honorary doctorate in recognition of his championing of human-rights causes. A long-time personal friend of Israel's sixth President Chaim Herzog, who passed away last month, Moynihan will also attend the official inauguration at BGU of the Chaim Herzog Middle East and Diplomacy Center.

And, on June 4, Ambassador William A. Brown, former US ambassador to Israel, will participate in an open symposium at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on the June 1967 War.

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu will be fitting between campuses over the next week. On June 28, he'll be on hand at the University of Haifa, where his aunt, retired Supreme Court Justice Shoshana Netanyahu, will be one of the recipients of an honorary doctorate in philosophy. And on June 1, he'll be at the opening session of the 60th meeting of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew University to witness the conferring of degrees of Doctor Philosophiae Honoris Causa on 10 dignitaries, including World Jewish Congress president Edgar Bronfman and celebrated best-selling author Herman Wouk.

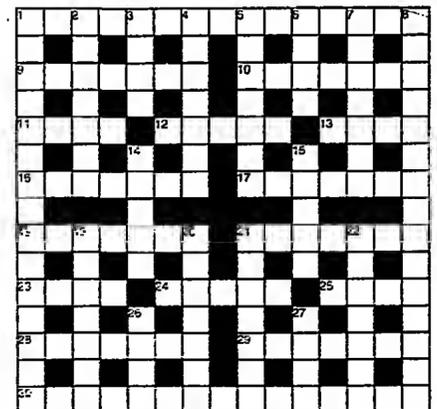
ALSO ON the campus shuffle is Dalia Rahin Pelosoff who together with her brother Yuval Rahin will attend the dedication at Haifa University on Sunday of the Yitzhak Rabin Complex for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Mathematics. On the following day she will be at Tel Aviv University for the opening of the Six Days - Thirty Years conference.

BELGIAN AMBASSADOR Mark Geleyn raised a laugh from some 500 guests when speaking at the opening of the newly renovated Heziya Art Museum. "My first impression is that you think I'm a schoolteacher," he said. "All the guests are at the back like pupils, and nobody is at the front." One of the oldest people present was 95-year-old Jacob Alkove, who donated his \$2 million art collection to the museum, and the youngest was a baby not yet a year old.

A WEDDING may also be in the offing for Barbara Streisand, who's wearing a wedding ring purchased for her by James Brodin. So far, the lady isn't talking, but the gentleman is waffling stony-eyed about a future which may include a new Mrs. Brodin.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Despicable note the PM can't be troubled about (7,8)
 - Beware males who are primitive (7)
 - Small talk makes little splash (7)
 - Three-quarters netted large fish (4)
 - Symposium shows union leader is in trim (5)
 - People's competition (4)
 - Resolved to dine without a lot of food (2,1,4)
 - Urgent information given during departure (7)
 - Not even graduate trainees can be bizarre (7)
 - Rust taken from bar in the centre (7)
 - Hungry chap makes complaint (4)
 - Escort for hard-hearted employer (5)
 - A game played by Kennedy (4)
 - One who lays out a finesman (7)
 - Intense love involves pains so terrible (7)
 - What feminists do to be self-employed? (4,2,3,6)
- DOWN**
- The Wedding March is not for him! (3,2,5)
 - Month before Fitzgerald produced a story (7)
 - Should it always include marines? (4)
 - Don't dry washing inside lodgings (4-3)
 - Ex-pup's remedy is hard to understand (7)
 - Dock pate always contains it (4)
 - The name applied to a gas (7)
 - Survived the crisis, but went round the bend (6,3,6)
 - Lively young lady full of sex appeal (5)
 - I entered shallow marine inlet (5)
 - Contract to give players their cards (2,1,4)
 - Purification after five years of desire and spirit (7)
 - New writer is lower in reputation (7)
 - Old copper with inclination to be a medic (7)
 - Adam's first home in Avon (4)
 - Where to find section of the Burma-Siam railway (4)

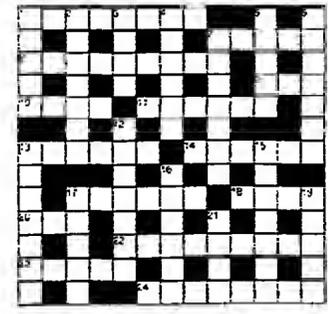


SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Seine, 4 Eyvora, 9 Cheddar, 10 Erase, 11 Nut, 12 Decline, 13 See, 14 Mms, 16 Sing, 18 Joy, 20 Abandon, 21 Asia, 24 Erave, 25 Respond, 26 Avenue, 27 Tread.
DOWN: 1 Second, 2 Idea, 3 Eddy, 5 Exercise, 6 Ovation, 7 Eleven, 8 Erode, 13 Seedless, 15 Unaware, 17 Lambda, 18 Insert, 19 Candy, 22 Show, 23 Aaby.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Agreeable (5)
 - Arboreal plants (5)
 - Belittle (9)
 - Overact (3)
 - Gaming stake (4)
 - Large prawns (6)
 - Long journey (6)
 - Amble (6)
 - Urge (6)
 - Pace (4)
 - Brownish-grey (3)
 - Attacker (9)
 - Mass (5)
 - With sincerity (5)
- DOWN**
- Italian city (5)
 - Mental identification (7)
 - Staunch (4)
 - Shade of meaning (6)
 - Indian capital (5)
 - Hagar's son (7)
 - White ant (7)
 - Intellectual (7)
 - Railway bridge (7)
 - Pariah (7)
 - Very fast (5)
 - Take delight in (5)
 - Small-minded (5)
 - Gamble (4)

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HIGH TECH

in brief

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Eldat, Siemens-Nixdorf sign marketing deal

Eldat Communication Ltd. and Siemens-Nixdorf recently signed a non-exclusive original equipment manufacturers agreement. According to the deal, Siemens-Nixdorf will market and sell Eldat's products under the Siemens-Nixdorf logo. Based in Bnei Brak, Eldat develops solutions for the retail market.

IET raises \$4.4m. in private placement

Intelligent Electronics, a developer of scheduling and diagnostic tools for the service industry, recently announced that Oak Investment Partners of California and Oppenheimer & Co., Inc. of New York have invested \$4.4m. in a private placement. Headquartered in Tel Aviv, IET's customers include Digital, Nikon, Nippon Telegraph and Honeywell.

Magic wins 'real-solution' award

Magic Software Enterprises has won the 1997 DB/EXPO RealWare award for the category of Client/Server Computing in Support of Mission-Critical Business Operations. Other finalists included IBM Canada LTD., and Versant Object Technology. Judged by industry editors and analysts, the award recognizes outstanding real-world user applications, with a focus on the innovative use of technology to create effective solutions for users.

Manov-Kom wins Bezeq tender

Manov-Kom, a member of the Formula Group, won a tender to computerize Bezeq International's telemarketing stations and business-to-business call centers. The company did not release the value of the deal. Business-to-business call centers are designed to help companies improve their marketing channels.

Orckit wins China contract

Orckit Communications recently announced that it won an HDSL contract to provide the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Post and Telecom with its HDSL equipment. The company did not disclose the size of the contract. Orckit's telecommunications equipment will initially be deployed in 21 Chinese cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Nanjing.

Salomon Bros. calls Nice systems 'strong buy'

Nice Systems Ltd. was reiterated a "strong buy" by Salomon Brothers. The company's first-quarter earnings per share exceeded Salomon Brothers' and Wall Street's forecasts. Based in Tel Aviv, Nice Systems manufactures voice logging systems for financial institutions, air traffic controllers and intelligence agencies, as well as call-center monitoring solutions. Nice recently purchased a Canadian company for \$3m.

Tadiran to present start-ups to potential investors

The Tadiran Group, in conjunction with the Israel Venture Capital Association, will hold a technology conference on May 27 to present its 12 subsidiaries to potential investors. The fledgling companies deal in such areas as semiconductors, cellular-phone equipment and medical software.

TTR Technologies and Nimbus to sign deal

TTR Technologies Ltd. recently signed a letter of intent to license its optical media anti-piracy solutions to Nimbus CD International, Inc., a compact disc maker. DiscGuardTM puts an indelible "fingerprint" on the optical medium (CD-ROM, CD-R, DVD, DVD-R, etc.) at the time of manufacture. The "fingerprint" can be read by any CD/DVD reader but cannot be duplicated by CD-R/DVD-R recorders or by re-mastering.

US threatens to ban El Al flights

By DAVID HARRIS

The US Department of Transportation has given Israel seven days to respond to claims that it has broken the two countries' bilateral air agreement, and threatens in the meantime to ban all El Al services to three major US destinations.

All El Al flights to Washington/Baltimore, Dallas/Fort Worth, and Orlando, Florida for passengers, property, and mail will be prevented from operating, commencing on May 28 unless a solution can be found to the disagreement.

This follows Israel's decision to prevent Tower Air operating a service between New York and Tel Aviv via Athens, in addition to its existing direct flights.

Since TWA in the mid-1980s, no one had offered flights on the New York-Athens-Tel Aviv route. On March 26, the US authorized Tower to fly this service twice weekly, an application which was also sent to the Civil Aviation Authority. On April 20, the CAA

denied Tower permission to fly, saying it had missed the application deadline it should have met in order to launch the service on June 15.

This decision flies in the face of the 1977 bilateral air agreement, which allows for flights from the US, via a third country, to Israel, according to the US.

Since the CAA has changed its decision, saying Tower can operate the route from October. This would mean the country would miss out on the lucrative summer and High Holy Days traffic. The US believes this delay is also in contravention of the agreement.

The United States government regrets that a conflict has arisen over the terms of the bilateral agreement of long-standing, signed between Israel and the US, Tain Tompkins, economic counsellor at the US Embassy, said yesterday.

Tower claims it has not acted in breach of the agreement. "We are extremely disappointed and hope good-mindedness will pre-

vail," company president and chairman Morris Nachtoml told *The Jerusalem Post*. "The 150 requirement in the agreement to apply before any given time, it just has to be a reasonable length of time. We are not a new carrier to Israel, so they could have processed our application in no more than half an hour."

In response to the Israeli action, Charles A. Hunnicutt, US assistant secretary for aviation and international affairs, decided on Wednesday to take action against El Al.

His decision to prevent El Al extending its US flights, through its partner North American Airways, to the three airports. The decision is not in contravention of the bilateral agreement, but was an extra courtesy offered to Israel.

The US has given all interested parties seven days from yesterday to raise objections to the plan through a show cause order. If none are forthcoming or are deemed insignificant, the ban will be carried implemented. "El Al will respond to the letter through the

Civil Aviation Authority by May 28, and we hope this matter will be resolved at that time," said El Al spokesman Nachman Klieman. He refused to state how much money El Al stands to lose by the ban on flights.

Last year, according to Israeli sources, an application by El Al to operate a service to San Francisco was rejected by the US because it was handed in late. As a result, El Al had to wait eight months.

The US is hopeful the matter can be resolved, according to Tompkins. "The US wants to do everything in its power to expand access to tourism in Israel and sees the provision of services over Athens as good for the Israeli tourism industry."

Annual revenues from the service are estimated at \$5 million by Tower. "Whatever happens from June 15, we intend operating four flights a week between New York and Athens," said Nachtoml. "The two forward flights to Israel will operate even if it is without passengers or cargo."

Hyundai, IEC in \$87m. deal

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Korean-based Hyundai Industries and the Israel Electric Corporation are to sign an agreement on Sunday for the construction of an \$87 million coal-firing power station at the Rutenberg power station just south of Ashkelon.

Hyundai presented IEC with the lowest of four tender bids for the jetty, which will have an annual unloading capacity of 6m. to 7m. tons.

The signing ceremony will be hosted by IEC director-general Yossi Peled and attended by Hyundai's President Young Jin Lee.

Work on the replacement coal-fired power station, which began in August last year, is on schedule, according to IEC spokeswoman Yael Ne'eman. The first of two units is expected to be completed in 2000 or perhaps before, and the second a year later.

Named after the founder of Israel's original electric corporation, the station will comprise

two units, each capable of generating 550 megawatts of electricity.

The existing Rutenberg station has been the cause of controversy between the IEC and State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat.

The original twin 550 MW unit power plant was to be operational by 1986.

But only one unit was put into operation in August 1990 and the second unit became operational in November 1991.

The 1995 State Comptroller's report criticized both the IEC for not meeting its deadlines and its board of directors for not moving the project along when it stalled.

Meanwhile, a group of five mid-level managers from Hyundai Electronics has completed a five-day visit to Israel. The group visited Tadiran Telecommunications, Rafael, Optibase and a number of start-ups.

A Hyundai representative refused to speak about the visit or about the company's intentions.

ILA head to be chosen 'imminently'

By DAVID HARRIS

National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon will appoint the new director-general of the Israel Lands Administration today or next week, a senior ILA official told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

The official would not reveal who the current candidate or candidates are, commenting "Only Arik [Sharon] knows this."

The top executive post in the ILA has been vacant since the resignation of Uzi Wexler on September 8. There is concern that some of the ILA's most important work has remained incomplete because of the absence of a director-general.

In many cases it has been impossible to complete contracts because only a permanent ILA director is permitted to be the signatory, according to National Infrastructure Ministry spokesman Ra'anan Gissin. This is also affecting the ILA's ability to free up land for development.

While stressing this is not currently being considered as an immediate course of action, Gissin gave the example of the squatters' complex opposite the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem; to remove them requires the director's signature.

"It is impossible to calculate the financial loss being incurred as a result of being without a director," said Gissin. "However, we hope to appoint someone in the next few weeks."

The appointment has become a political hot potato since the Bar-On Affair hit the headlines, making ministers more cautious about approving appointments to top civil service jobs.

On May 2 the cabinet refused to approve the appointment of Yossi Antver because of his involvement in a 1988 Likud accounts scandal, despite Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein's opinion that any legal challenge to the appointment could be successfully defended.

For some six months, ILA Regional department director Meron Humash was acting in Wexler's place, but about a month ago Sharon removed Humash from the position for undisclosed reasons.

"Humash was acting as the director-general, and as such was legally allowed to fill all the roles of a permanent director-general," said the ILA official. "At first it was thought we couldn't sign on contracts, but then our legal adviser said it would be in order for members of the contracts committee to do so. The failure to appoint someone has been bad news, but there's no need for hysteria."

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

The Treasury and the Bank of Israel both oppose legislating a cap on the amount of commission credit card companies can charge retailers, a Treasury spokesman said yesterday.

However, the two agencies have not determined whether they oppose a recent suggestion by several MKs to set a ceiling on the commission credit card companies can charge merchants.

The proposal to cap the commission at 2.5% is designed to assist retailers who are suffering from lower sales as a result of the slowdown in the economy, a Treasury spokesman said.

"Given the current state of the economy, lowering the ceiling [on commission] will be for the merchant's benefit," he said.

Lowering the ceiling will not affect the consumer, the spokesman said. But credit-card companies are likely to protest a change. Currently, the rate of commission is set on a case-by-case between the credit-card company and its customers.

"Commission will continue to

be set according to market forces, like it is done today," said Haim Krupsky, general manager of Isracard.

Labor and Tsomet MKs originally requested that the Knesset pass a law setting the ceiling at 2.5%. Both the Bank of Israel and the Treasury oppose such legislation on grounds that it would be inflexible, requiring the passing of amendments each time the government wants to raise or lower the commission ceiling.

Meanwhile, the Antitrust Authority is currently investigating the two main credit card companies on suspicion they effectively operate a monopoly. Visa holds 49% of the credit card market share and Isracard holds 44%, while Diner's Card holds a 4% share and American Express has the remaining 3%.

Visa controls Diner's Card and Isracard operates American Express' local activities.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patiah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375
Pound sterling (£100,000)	5.875	4.000	4.500
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.625	1.625	2.125
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.750	1.000
Yen (10 million yen)	-	-	-

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (22.5.97)

Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.6702	3.7294	3.30	3.47	3.7011
German mark	1.9854	2.0175	1.95	2.05	2.0083
Pound sterling	5.5174	5.8068	5.42	5.89	5.5705
French franc	0.5982	0.5982	0.57	0.51	0.5569
Japanese yen (100)	2.9074	2.9543	2.85	3.00	2.9358
Dutch florin	1.7885	1.7950	1.73	1.82	1.7850
Swiss franc	2.3811	2.4198	2.34	2.46	2.4072
Swedish krona	0.4446	0.4518	0.43	0.46	0.4486
Norwegian krona	0.4781	0.4859	0.46	0.50	0.4838
Denish krone	0.5215	0.5300	0.51	0.54	0.5270
Finnish mark	0.6578	0.6685	0.64	0.68	0.6655
Canadian dollar	2.4962	2.4958	2.41	2.54	2.4771
Australian dollar	2.8276	2.8700	2.86	2.71	2.8523
S. African rand	0.7534	0.7558	0.68	0.77	0.7600
Belgian franc (10)	0.8623	0.8779	0.94	1.00	0.9720
Austrian schilling (10)	2.8213	2.8669	2.77	2.91	2.8513
Italian lira (1000)	2.0173	2.0499	1.98	2.06	2.0382
Jordanian dinar	4.7487	4.8253	4.69	5.01	4.8383
Egyptian pound	0.8800	1.0400	0.98	1.04	1.0867
ECU	3.8784	3.9390	-	-	3.9168
Irish punt	5.3889	5.1812	5.01	5.28	5.1670
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3587	2.3948	2.31	2.43	2.3819

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Message

Christian-Moslem fighting in Turan breaks out again

By DAVID RUDGE

Riots between Moslem and Christian family clans in Turan in the lower Galilee are continuing, over a month after they erupted in the normally quiet village.

A man from the Moslem Dahleh family was stabbed by three masked men and moderately wounded late Wednesday night, prompting a further round of fighting in the village.

During the riots, as many as six private cars were gutted by fire and four houses were damaged,

some badly. Two police cars were also damaged.

At the height of the fighting, as stones were raining down on police trying to restore order, shots from an air rifle were fired at the house belonging to a Moslem family.

Most of the damage was caused to cars and homes of members of the Christian Khouri family. Police used tear gas to disperse the rioters, but the disturbances were only brought under control at 4 a.m. yesterday.

A total of nine people were

arrested, two in connection with the stabbing, one for the shooting and the rest on suspicion of throwing firebombs and stones at cars, homes and the police.

The fighting between the clans in the village, where 80 per cent of the 9,000 inhabitants are Moslems and the remainder Greek Orthodox Christians, has left a Christian dead and four Moslems wounded — two of them seriously.

Attempts to reconcile the sides have failed to end the fighting, and there have been reports that some Christians are leaving the village.

Ichilov uses new melanoma treatment

By JUDY SIEGEL

Doctors at Ichilov Hospital have been the first in Israel to use a new technique for saving melanoma patients from having to undergo the complete surgical removal of their lymph glands.

In another Israeli "first," at Sheba Hospital at Tel Hashomer, surgeons used a tiny plastic pillow maneuvered by a robot to perform a hysterectomy.

The lymph gland surgery, used to check if a tumor that began in the skin spread to the lymphatic system, often causes pain and swelling of the limbs and a resultant decline in the patient's quality of life. Some 600 Israelis are diagnosed with melanoma every year.

Research has shown that melanoma metastasizes in a clear anatomical route to one or two "drainage basins" out of a chain of such basins in the lymphatic sys-

tem. The researchers reached the conclusion that if the basin most directly connected to the tumor — called the "gatekeeper gland" — is free of cancer, then the whole system is "clean"; if the first one in the chain is affected, it is likely that it has reached others as well.

In the new technique, a radioactive contrast material and a blue dye are injected before surgery. These materials pass through the route of a tumor from the melanoma to the lymph glands, pointing out to the doctors which is the first that was reached.

During surgery, the gatekeeper gland is identified using a Geiger counter and removed for a biopsy. If it is affected, all the other basins are removed. But if it is found to be free of cancerous cells, the patient is saved the complete removal of all the drainage glands.

Dr. Shlomo Shneibush of the Surgery A department at Ichilov

brought the technique to Israel. After studying the results of pathology reports of biopsies from 20 patients, 18 were found to have "clean" gatekeeper glands and were spared major surgery. Doctors also corroborated the theory that if the gatekeeper gland is free of cancer cells, the other basins are unaffected.

Meanwhile, Sheba Hospital reported yesterday it is the first Israeli hospital to perform a hysterectomy via laparoscopy without introducing carbon dioxide gas into the patient's body.

A soft plastic "pillow" is introduced through a hole at the navel; a tiny robot pushes the pillow upwards and raises the abdominal tissue to allow the operation to take place. A number of operations to remove other types of tissue have been performed here using the pillow, but not such a complicated procedure as a hysterectomy.



Sharing the burden
New immigrants from Ukraine, Turkey and Bulgaria learn about the IDF yesterday, during a seminar in Tiberias to increase immigrants' motivation to serve in the army. Some 750 immigrants took part in the event, which was cosponsored by the Jewish Agency and Gadna. (Israel Hadrati)

Lieberman defends proposal to bypass planning law

By LIAT COLLINS

Despite opposition from several ministries, MKs and all the major environmental groups, Prime Minister's Office Director-General Avigdor Lieberman is pursuing his initiative to legislate a "national enterprises law," which would bypass the National Planning and Construction Law for designated development projects.

The law would make it unnecessary to bear residents' objections to such major projects as Ben-Gurion Airport 2000 plan, moving Sde Dov airport, developing the Negev's Duda'im landfill, the Trans-Israel Highway and moving the gas depot at Pi Gilot.

The proposal does not define "national enterprises," but Lieberman has asked all ministry directors-general to draw up a list of major projects under their jurisdiction that they think should be included. Lieberman said this week he expects the full list to be ready at the beginning of July.

Under Lieberman's proposal, the government would be able to declare a project to be a "national enterprise" because of its national importance or on economic grounds, if the prevailing law would delay its implementation. The government would then draw

up special regulations for the project, which would require the approval of the Knesset Law Committee.

Lieberman presented the idea two weeks ago to the Forum of Ministry Directors-General, many of whom immediately expressed opposition. Environment Ministry Director-General Nehama Ronen described it as "anti-democratic" and "fraught with the dangers of an environmental disaster." She said delays in major projects nearly always occur at the government level, not because of objections by individuals.

The directors-general of the National Infrastructure, Tourism and Religious Affairs ministries all voiced objections, along with the Justice Ministry's representative.

Interior Minister Eli Suissa instructed his director-general, Ya'acov Efrati, not to attend forum meetings dealing with the legislation, saying the Lieberman's initiative was not coordinated with the Interior Ministry, which is in charge of planning laws.

Lieberman this week defended his proposal, however, telling reporters: "There are some people who have turned opposition against national projects into a

sport. I have come to the conclusion that we have to break out of this circle. The situation cannot continue in which it takes 15 years from the decision to build the Ben-Gurion Airport 2000 program to approval by the National Planning and Construction Council, and there are High Court petitions still pending.

"All the large projects in Israel got moving only because of special legislation, and the most successful example is council for expedited building permits. Without the expediting committees we couldn't have succeeded in absorbing the wave of aliya that began arriving at the end of the 1980s," Lieberman said.

But "green" groups reacted with concern to the comparison to the expediting committees.

"Initiating legislation that will bypass the Planning and Construction Law is a dangerous idea that is likely to bring about anarchy from the planning viewpoint, critical harm to the environment and a blow to the basic right of individuals to preserve the quality of life and their surroundings," said Yanef Tamir, chairman of Life and Environment, an umbrella organization representing 35 green groups.

Yoav Saguy, chairman of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, said the results of the expediting committees included building neighborhoods without adequate sewage systems; land-guzzling homes which remained vacant; luxury homes instead of housing for immigrants; and construction close to environmental and health hazards.

MKs from a range of parties also object to the initiative. Meretz leader Yossi Sarid described it as: "Further scorn on top of the infamous expediting committees, whose environmental wounds we are still licking today." He asked Avraham Herschson (Likud) to convene the Knesset's Green Caucus to discuss the issue.

Knesset Interior and Environment Committee Chairman Salih Tarif wrote to Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, who heads the Ministerial Committee on Legislation, to "warn him of the attempt to determine Knesset legislative procedure and bypass committees."

A spokesman in the Prime Minister's Office said yesterday the bill was "not yet completely formulated and provisions would be made to ensure basic rights are maintained."

ANALYSIS

Hizbullah power struggle may have sparked attacks

By DAVID RUDGE

The marked escalation in Hizbullah's activities against the IDF and South Lebanese Army in the security zone in the past few weeks is apparently due in part to a rift within the ranks of the extremist Shi'ite organization.

Veteran Lebanese observers told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday that Hizbullah secretary-general Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah has recently been trying to improve his militant image as he fights to retain his leadership.

He has been seen blessing fighters from Hizbullah's fighting arm, the Islamic Resistance, following the clash with IDF paratroopers last Thursday northwest of the Zummriya crossing point on the edge of the security zone.

Three soldiers were killed and seven wounded in the clashes in that incident, in which at least two members of the Islamic Resistance were also killed.

Nasrallah has also intensified his own rhetoric, with virulent verbal attacks on the US, as well as repeated calls for the need to "liberate Jerusalem." According to the observers, Nasrallah had previously been more pragmatic and steered clear of what was in the past "normal" Iranian-inspired Hizbullah rhetoric.

Instead he concentrated on forging Hizbullah into an "acceptable" political party with members in the Lebanese parliament, as well as a social movement aimed at improving the lot of the country's Shi'ite population.

He remained aloof, to some extent, from Hizbullah's military activities, despite the fact that he originates from the south of the country.

Nevertheless, Nasrallah, like his predecessor Sheikh Abbas Musawi, who was killed along with other members of his family in an IAF helicopter attack in south Lebanon in 1992, is acutely aware that Hizbullah's raison d'être is still primarily that of a resistance force fighting "the Zionist enemy's occupation of south Lebanon." Now Nasrallah is reverting to type, apparently because of what he perceives as a

threat to his leadership from former Hizbullah secretary-general, Sheikh Subhi Tufileh.

Tufileh headed Hizbullah in 1989, some six years after its foundation, until 1992 when he was ousted by the more pragmatic Musawi.

He failed in his re-election bid, following Musawi's assassination, losing to the younger and more charismatic Nasrallah, who received the support of the Iranian leadership at the time.

Tufileh, an ideological radical who believes in the principles of the Iranian revolution, was reported to have launched a bid in 1994 to create a separate Hizbullah entity known as "the Soldiers of God," but failed: He was vehemently opposed to Hizbullah's entry into Lebanese politics, maintaining that the organization's only purpose is to "liberate south Lebanon as a prelude to freeing Jerusalem."

Since then, Tufileh and his militant supporters have been sitting on the sidelines, waiting for an opportunity to return to Hizbullah's mainstream and gain a central place in the organization.

The opportunity has arisen with the forthcoming elections in Iran. With attention focused on the national poll and the prospect of intervention obviously lessened, Tufileh recently announced the formation of a new body known as the "Revolution of the Hungry." According to the prestigious *Foreign Report*, the formation of the new group was preceded by the ousting of several radical elements known to be Tufileh supporters from the ranks of Hizbullah's politburo.

Tufileh, however, was adamant that the new movement was not a rival to Hizbullah, but was opposed to the policies of the Lebanese government which had affected the poor, most of whom are Shi'ites.

Furthermore, he organized a mass rally in Ba'albeck on Ashura Day, one of the holiest days in the Shi'ite calendar, for all those who felt oppressed by the Lebanese government.

The rally, in a place where Hizbullah normally holds its

Ashura celebrations, was attended by thousands of people, including many from the Bekaa Valley where Tufileh himself originates.

The residents of the Bekaa have been badly hit by the Syrian-inspired decision of the Lebanese government to crack down on the poppy cultivation for the manufacture of drugs. The farmers have been told to grow alternative crops.

Syria's role in the drugs crackdown, including the reported burning of poppy fields, was apparently aimed at trying to remove Syria from America's "blacklist" of drug-producing countries.

Iran's ambassador to Lebanon intervened to try and heal the rift in the ranks of Hizbullah prior to Tufileh's show of strength, but to no avail. Nasrallah capitulated and Hizbullah's main Ashura ceremony was held in a village close to Ba'albeck.

Ever since the establishment of the new movement, Nasrallah has been trying to reassert his militant image, apparently because of the perceived threat to his leadership from Tufileh and his supporters.

One of the results has been a marked increase in Hizbullah's operations against the IDF and SLA in the security zone. The so-called Soujoud operation by Hizbullah over a week ago in which Hizbullah gunmen tried unsuccessfully to overrun the SLA outpost was also dedicated "the general commander of the Islamic Resistance" — Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah.

According to veteran Lebanese observers it is "very unusual" for Hizbullah to dedicate an operation to a living person. Normally they are named after martyrs of the organization.

Foreign Report predicts that Tufileh's efforts to seize control of Hizbullah or establish a separate extremist Shi'ite entity will ultimately prove fruitless and Nasrallah will remain in control after the organization's general congress in the summer. In the meantime, however, the recent escalation in Hizbullah attacks can be expected to continue.

MAFIA

Continued from Page 10

According to newspaper reports, Lerner had been given huge sums to launder in Israel by the Russian underworld and had expropriated the money.

He hired former senior Bank of Israel officials in his futile attempt to gain permission to open a bank. But he did get permission to open an investment company. He wangled introductions to leading politicians as a potential campaign contributor and he held talks about the purchase of the newspaper *Davar* before it went under.

Former *Davar* editor Ron Ben-Yishai says he had been warned off the deal by intelligence officials with whom he consulted.

In 1994, Israel agreed to a request from Russia that police minister Mnshe Shahal get a first-hand report on Lerner's deeds from a Moscow bank manager. However, on his way to Moscow's airport to fly to Tel Aviv, the bank manager's car blew up. Russian officials suggest that Lerner was involved in this and perhaps other murders.

In Israel, Lerner managed to achieve a measure of respectability by donating millions to hospitals, schools and immigrant absorption projects. Last Hanukka, he climbed the staircase of an office building in Ashkelon's old Migdal Quarter to dedicate a suite converted into a community center for Russian immigrants which he was financing.

"He said a few words," said Yuri Zamoshek, director of the center,

and he gave stipends to 30 tenaged youngsters. We spoke about his plans to build a 'Beit Oleh' that would serve as a community center for all immigrants in Ashkelon, not just Russians. He was prepared to spend millions on the project."

Lerner was not above participating in small-scale community events like a question-and-answer evening organized last fall by a business club formed by young Russian immigrants in Ashkelon.

"He related to us as equals," says Sergei Bargon, 21, one of the organizers of the evening. One of the questions asked was whether Lerner's daughter intended to follow him into business.

"He said she was more interested in art," said Preskovsky, who was also there. "He also said she didn't want him dropping her off at school in his Mercedes." It was at this meeting that Lerner was asked for his advice on making money. He enjoyed the give-and-take sufficiently to offer to pay the expenses for the evening but the youths declined.

MK Marina Slodkin of Yisrael Ba'aliya takes a scholarly view of the rise of the mafia in Russia and sees no danger of it finding a home in Israel.

"The majority of the economy in Russia is criminalized but I don't use the term 'mafia' because I understand the circumstances in which this came about," she says. "In the transitional period from state ownership to the free market, there was no individual capital so it was the underground that privatized businesses as well as people who had been part of the econom-

ic and political establishment. Many made huge fortunes.

"The Jews who came here are of another class. They didn't manage to accommodate themselves to the new system. They didn't want to be criminal and didn't want to live in a state incapable of bringing stability. The handful of very wealthy Jews who did come here came with their families and see Israel as an asylum. We have to differentiate between them and the real Russian mafia."

The readiness in Israel to associate Russian immigrants with mafia is partly due, she says, to lack of understanding and partly to anti-immigrant sentiment. But the attitude, says Slodkin, is also encouraged by political elements who regard the organized Russian immigrant vote as a threat.

"We are 15 percent of the electorate and will be 18 percent in 2000."

Lerner's Mercedes was sitting forlorn in his driveway this week on Zvi Segal Street, but anyone pausing to stare into the house found a security guard staring back.

Mrs. Lerner, an attractive woman, appeared on television this week to express dismay at the allegations of murder and theft directed at her husband and to say that he had built himself up from nothing since his arrival in Israel.

At the community center founded by Lerner, director Yuri Zamoshek said Lerner's guilt had yet to be proven. "It's not for us to say," said Zamoshek. "We're not Shas and we're not going to fill a stadium with people shouting that he's innocent. The courts will decide."

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הכלה מן האוכל

100,000 municipal workers set to strike

By DAVID HARRIS and Jim
 Over 100,000 municipal workers are expected to go on strike at midnight on Saturday, shutting down municipal services, including garbage collection and day-care centers.
 The strike was declared following a meeting yesterday between Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz and Union of Local Authorities representatives. Employees of all local councils, including Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, are expected to strike.

A meeting between the ULA and Finance Ministry later in the day failed to produce a compromise. Following the meeting with Finance Minister Dan Meridor, ULA head Eli Eldar announced, "We were unable to reach agreement and therefore we will carry on with our planned strike, despite the opening of negotiations."
 The municipalities are demanding the Treasury allocate NIS 4 billion to cover debts built up by local authorities around the country. The Treasury, meanwhile, is unhappy with what it sees as the

mismanagement of local council budgets.
 Traffic was snarled around the country yesterday morning, as local authorities' workers used garbage trucks, buses, vans, and construction vehicles to block more than 200 intersections, roads, and border crossings. The protest caused serious traffic jams at the Shiva and Poleg interchanges and the Maccabim-Re'ut, Kastina, Beit Lid, Alonim, and Mesubim junctions. A police helicopter hovered over several of the blocked junctions in an attempt to disperse the workers.
 Yesterday afternoon, Insp.-Gen. Assaf Hefetz went to the protest tent the ULA has set up by the Prime Minister's Office to ask the ULA to call off plans to block the roads again on Sunday. The ULA responded that it did not want to disturb residents, but the government's actions had left it no choice.
 Eldar said that the traffic jams were just "the tip of the iceberg" and that the ULA would increase sanctions until the government solves the debt crisis.

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza and Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai joined council heads at the ULA protest tent yesterday afternoon to express their support and promised to raise the issue in today's cabinet meeting.
 The council heads then went to the Finance Ministry, where police and security guards blocked their path to Meridor's office. In response, they blockaded the entrance to the ministry for about an hour, refusing to allow Finance Ministry Director-General Shmuel

WEATHER

Galilee 13-24	Jerusalem 14-25	Beersheba 16-31	Dead Sea 22-36
Haifa 17-25	Tiberias 17-31	Afula 18-30	Somaria 15-28
Tel Aviv 17-25			

Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear. Shabbat: No change in temperatures.
AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Notes
Amsterdam	10	15	cloudy
Barcelona	12	18	clear
Buenos Aires	12	18	clear
Chicago	10	15	cloudy
Frankfurt	10	15	cloudy
Hong Kong	20	26	clear
London	10	15	cloudy
Los Angeles	18	24	clear
Madrid	18	24	clear
Moscow	10	15	cloudy
New York	10	15	cloudy
Paris	10	15	cloudy
Rome	14	20	clear
Toronto	10	15	cloudy
Vancouver	10	15	cloudy
Zurich	10	15	clear



Right-wing extremists yesterday try to present Beersheba Prison guards with presents for Yigal Amir. (AP)

Extremists celebrate Yigal Amir's birthday

By RAINE MARCUS and BAT SHEVA TSUR
 Minor clashes broke out yesterday when groups of left-wing and right-wing activists gathered around Beersheba Prison, where Yitzhak Rabin's assassin Yigal Amir is incarcerated.
 Extremist right-wingers, headed by Avigdor Eskin, wished to celebrate Amir's 27th birthday, and brought him champagne, chocolates, and flowers. But authorities refused to allow Eskin and his group to give the gifts to prison guards.
 Eskin, who hurled a stone at a passing taxi driver who shouted at the group, was detained for questioning and released.
 Eskin told reporters that if Israeli citizens cel-

ebate the birthday of missing navigator Ron Arad, then he and others have every right to celebrate the birthday of Yigal Amir.
 Prisons Service spokeswoman Orit Messer Harel said that prisoners are "treated well," but noted sarcastically that "we don't celebrate their birthdays."
 One supporter Yosef Ben-Zvi said that he had brought a silver medallion for Amir's birthday. On the medallion was inscribed: "All honor to the righteous Yigal Amir, from all proud Jews."
 The gathering caused shock waves among politicians. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed disgust at the fact there are still people who support the murder of Rabin.
 MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) filed a complaint with the police, requesting the incident be inves-

tigated and describing the "celebration" as an incitement to violence, and an encouragement to other potential murderers.
 MK Missim Zvilli (Labor) described the would-be celebrators as "a group of sick and dangerous people," and expressed his and the party's disgust at the group's comparison of Amir and Ron Arad.
 Meanwhile, Amir's mother, Geula, has submitted a complaint against former attorney-general Michael Ben-Yair to the Israel Bar Association. She charges that Ben-Yair failed to prosecute alleged General Security Service informer Avishai Raviv who, she claims, lied when he testified at the trial of her other son, Haggai. Haggai Amir was found guilty of acting as his brother's accomplice.

Bronfman replaces Wiesel on Swiss fund

By Jerusalem Post Staff
 Edgar Bronfman, head of the World Jewish Congress, will temporarily replace Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel on the Swiss humanitarian fund to aid needy Holocaust survivors, the WJC announced in New York on Wednesday.
 Wiesel resigned from the seven-member Swiss-Jewish board on May 6. In an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*, he cited conflicts over the board and said he was not comfortable determining how to distribute the money to survivors.
 The fund, established in February, is to allocate hundreds of millions of Swiss francs to needy survivors. Its work has been delayed by the inability to name a stable board.
 Switzerland's Federal Council named the four Swiss members on April 16. The fund's president is Rolf Bloch, head of the Swiss Jewish community.
 In the last two months, the board has lost two of the original choices for the three Jewish seats. The first choices were Wiesel, US Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, and Likud MK Avraham Herschson. Eizenstat declined, and was replaced by National Religious Party elder statesman Josef Burg.
 The World Jewish Restitution Organization, which Bronfman also leads, will name a permanent replacement for Wiesel at its board meeting in Jerusalem on June 2. WJC executive director Elan Steinberg told Reuters.

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Matza complains about Treasury deal

By JUDY SIEGEL
 Health Minister Yehoshua Matza will complain at today's cabinet meeting that he was not consulted about a Treasury deal to transfer NIS 33 million to the nearly bankrupt, Likud-affiliated Kupat Holim Leumit.
 Matza, whose ministry has been at odds for months with the Treasury,

learned of the deal from the Hebrew press yesterday.
 This money, however, is mostly to cover what Leumit is owed for January 1995, the first month the National Health Insurance Law was in effect. All the health funds fell short in collections that month, because while they were no longer allowed to take membership fees from members' bank accounts, their

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